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FIFTY YEARS OF MY LIFE

VOL. II



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"Clean Broke." thinking it out

FIFTY YEARS OF MY LIFE

IN THE WORLD OF SPORT
AT HOME AND ABROAD

BY
SIR JOHN DUGDALE ASTLEY, BART.
"THE MATE"

*"The web of our life is of a mingled yarn
Good and ill together."*—SHAKESPEARE

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. II

LONDON
HURST AND BLACKETT, LIMITED
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1894

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FIFTY YEARS OF MY LIFE

CHAPTER I.

A Break in my Work—When the Cat's Away—Decide to Retire from Army—Take up Our Quarters at Elsham—The Brocklesby Hounds and Country—I Purchase Cockeye—Anecdotes of Corbett—The Good Samaritan—Davy of Worlaby—Gaylad and Lottery—Lord Henry Bentinck and the Burton Hounds—Coursing at Bryn-y-Pys—I Lose a Good Mare—Take a Perilous Voyage Across the River Dee—A Generous Father-in-law.

SEPTEMBER 16th, 1893. *N.B.*—Early in June my Editor started for Norway, and, though I promised to send him out copy twice a week, receiving ample and particular instructions as to the best days to post the result of my labours, yet the old adage came only too true: “When the cat’s away, the mice will play.” The fact is, the weather was so splendid I could not sit indoors and scribble, and, in addition, I felt that my friend (the cat in this case) ought to be devoting all his attention to catching sticklebacks or whatever *poisson* the poor followers of our old friend Isaac Walton endeavour to wheedle out of

the Norwegian torrents, and, further, I considered it would be very rough on him to distract his thoughts from the rapid rushes of the *salmo ferox* to the vapid vapourings of the *mediocriti docti*; so I took it easy, and waited till the weather broke and the days shortened.*

I feel, however, that I have not kept faith with my Publishers or my Subscribers, though I am possibly the only loser by the delay; for I had fondly looked forward to producing this book during the autumn, and was hopeful I might thereby turn an honest penny, and be in a position to invest a century or so of my earnings on the probable winner of one, or both, of the big autumn handicaps at Newmarket. But, alas! I feel that I shall be unable even to toss a solitary tanner to my numerous and long-suffering creditors at Christmas. Never mind (though I fear they will mind), the author is at work again, and let us hope the rest has done him good. This sounds to me wonderfully like the heartfelt aspiration of the trainer of some dicky-legged racer, after rain had fallen; but, be that as it may, I know that if ever I have enough money again to buy a racehorse, I shall call him "The Author," which, to my thinking, signifies gameness

* Sir John's consideration for his Editor is beyond all praise!—
EDITOR.

and uphill work. What odds, reader, that he does not win the Ascot Hunt Cup? At any rate, I shall back him both ways, if it ever comes off. Well, to put it shortly, I gave up work at Ascot time, and now commence again after Doncaster.

As our pleasant time at dear old Windsor drew to a close, and the battalion was about to move to London again, and leave would be hard to get, I, with the approval of my people, decided to send in my papers and give up soldiering. I had been eleven and a half years in harness, and, taking the rough with the smooth, had spent a very pleasant time in the regiment; but I was never fond of the art of war, or mechanical drill. What I did like was the fellowship of as good a lot of brother officers as could be found in the service, and I was real proud of the splendid body of men who composed the Scots Fusilier Guards. I refer particularly to my old comrades with whom I started for the Crimea in 1854. When quartered at Windsor, and Chichester, I got to know every man in the battalion by sight, and nearly all by name, and verily believe I knew the characters of the men better than any of the other officers. I certainly did of those who cared for any athletic game or sport, and these were divided into two classes—men who took part in games and sport, and men who

were as keen to look on and applaud their comrades when doing well, as the old and present Eton boys are to encourage the eleven when playing their annual cricket-match against Harrow at Lord's. Yes! I knew the men well, and they knew me, and I don't mind telling you that at Windsor, I more than once helped—or at any rate screened—a man who had taken a drop too much, and was pulling himself together, so as to pass into the gate before tattoo, and make for his barrack-room without being put in the guard-room, particularly if I knew he was a good soldier and a cheery mortal, who had most likely not spent a penny in drink, but had been treated not wisely, but too well, by friends in the town. However, I am getting on delicate ground. What would the Commanding Officer or the Adjutant have said if they had known of my lax principles?

Another reason for leaving was this: I hold that when an officer gets "wed" he either must, in a manner of speaking, desert—or, I should say, see little of—his wife, or else of his boon companions of the mess. Thus it came to pass that I sold my commission, and realised just about what my steps had cost me, £8000, which money came in very handy; and, though much of it was wanted by tradesmen and others, yet I had enough left to buy

three or four hunters, which I stabled at Elsham. Grandpapa was very proud of his grandson, and gladly found nursery-room for him, and a welcome for us.

I will vary the scene a little now and spin a bit of a yarn over the Brocklesby Hounds and their followers. As everybody knows, the Brocklesby have been kept for generations by the family of Pelham, the Earls of Yarborough, who have in the most generous and lordly manner paid the whole of the expenses, and horses, hounds, and hunt-servants have never been better turned out in any country. I believe I am right in saying that the Brocklesby pack has been longer under command of one family than any other pack in England.* In no other district can there be found so many real good sportsmen amongst the tenant-farmers as in Lincolnshire, especially in the north-east corner of that extensive county; and in the sixties, when I first hunted with the Brocklesby, amongst a lot of other good men were such as old Tom Brooks of Croxby, Captain Jack Skipworth (Don Pedro) of Howsham, Edmund

* The earliest intelligence I can procure as to the Brocklesby Hounds, is that the pack was started about 1720 by Messrs. Tyrwhitt, Pelham and Vyner, the kennels being then at Aylesby. The staff consisted of the huntsman and a boy. Subsequently the kennels were removed to Brocklesby and the hounds hunted by the Pelham family from then till the present day.—J. D. A.

Davy of Worlaby, Billy Wood of Habro', Billy Wright of Wold Newton, the Bros. Walker, the Hazletines, the Frankishes, the Nainbys, old Billy Torr (of Shorthorn celebrity), and many others.

About fifty yeomen used to hunt in pink, and kept their two or three hunters, many of them bred by themselves; for in those days there were an extraordinary number of good horses bred in that country, both thorough and half bred. Fitz Oldaker, the saddler of Park Street, used to buy the pick of the young horses; he was a great friend of Captain Skipworth's, with whom he used to stay for a spell of hunting every year, and he was entrusted with unlimited commissions by Baron Rothschild and others. The London dealers also used to scour our country, and all the best young horses were bought up before Lincoln Fair came round; but now, in 1893, bad times, and consequently diminution of capital and spending power, has altered the country a lot, and it is the exception to hear of a real good hunter or a racehorse (worthy of the name) being bred in the Brocklesby country. The fields with the hounds have also dwindled much, both in numbers and pinks.

The squire and I often used to drive to the meets of the Brocklesby Hounds together, and when they met within easy reach, the wife joined us, and

as the Wolds always rode fairly light and the fences were small, she enjoyed a good gallop and went as straight as any one. I bought a good horse about this time of one of Lord Yarborough's tenants; I called him "Cockeye," as he was short of an optic. He was a very clever hunter and I saw a lot of sport on him. Corbett kept a few half-bred mares with two or three crosses of blood in them, and these he mated with a thoroughbred sire—Cornerstone by Touchstone, and Morgan Rattler, to wit—and at one time he had five or six real useful hunters of his own breeding.

The squire had been a very hard rider, and when long past sixty he would go straight on the Wolds; but he had terribly hard hands and all his horses pulled with him in consequence. Then, again, he was very short-sighted and used to ride in spectacles, and as the glasses often got a film of steam or rain on them, he could hardly discern anything. Several stories were told of him, but the two following I can vouch for :

One day, when the hounds were running, he was observed jobbing his horse's mouth and whipping the poor brute, and when asked by an old friend why he was so hard on his horse, he replied: "Why, can't you see how the brute has been bucking with me, he nearly had me off!" and no one was more

astonished than the squire when his friend told him that the intelligent animal had just jumped three or four sheep-nets with him, which Corbett, of course, had not seen. Another time he was seen holding his horse tight by the head, and in angry tones exhorting an imaginary sportsman to get out of his way: "Now then, sir, will you oblige me by standing aside! If *you* won't have it, let me come; if you don't move I'll ride over you, &c. &c.," every moment becoming more furious. At length one of the field rode up and told him that it was an old pollard ash tree in the fence that he had been swearing at. How he escaped real bad falls was a miracle.

One of his best hunters was a wonderful safe conveyance; she was a white ticked mare with a very light mouth—a pleasanter animal to ride could not be; but his heavy hands did not suit her delicate mouth, and she used to throw up her head badly with him. I saw her one day hit the squire an awful bang on his forehead, and he gave her "Jack's-alive" round the field, and when he eventually pulled her up and I offered to hold her whilst he got righted, I found him in a woful plight: both the glasses of his spectacles were broken, and it was marvellous that none of the glass had gone into his eyes—he was a game old boy and no mistake. One

of the best horses he bred I sold for him to Colonel Blundell for £300, who hoped to win the Grand Military with him; but, through some accident, it didn't come off, though I believe the horse was good enough.

Old Will Smith hunted the Brocklesby in those days and showed some good sport. I recollect a good story of him, which I often quote when wishing to demonstrate that no quarrel or petty spite, ought ever to interfere with any sportsman's fellow-feeling towards a brother Nimrod when in difficulties. An old sporting parson of much experience in the hunting-field, used to act as master when Lord Yarborough was not out, and he and the huntsman were old cronies who knew every yard of the country. It so happened that another sporting parson, not half a bad sort, an own brother to a M.F.H. of high renown, was given a living in the Brocklesby country: he was a good man to hounds, but a bit short of cash—result being that both his two horses and his hunting-kit were much past their best. This new parson had made himself obnoxious to the huntsman, as well as to the deputy-master; the one disliked him as much as the other. One day when the hounds were running fast and the young parson was going well, he met with a terrible mishap; for, as his horse made an extra effort in

negotiating a fence, suddenly both girths broke, and, though the rider was not hurt, yet there he stood by the side of his horse utterly done for. Just then his two enemies hove in sight: the parson, inwardly chuckling at his discomfiture, "passed by on the other side"; the old huntsman said nothing, but as he passed he cocked up one leg and then the other, unbuckling one of his girths the while, and threw it to his foe. Which of the twain, think you, was friend to he that fell from his horse? We will allow that both these old cronies were equally good sportsmen, and equally good haters of their unfortunate enemy; but what a wide difference there was in their humanity!

I think you will agree with me that it was very long odds on the man that blew the horn on week-days, against the one that gave out the hymns on Sunday. The one was real glad to see his foe on the floor and would not help him; the other, though perhaps not over sorry to see him discomfited, yet felt bound to do what he could for him. The parson rejected, but the huntsman put in practice the most useful of all injunctions: "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you"; and again, "If thy enemy thirst give him drink"—both which, literally rendered in fox-hunting lore in this case, mean: "If a man loses his girths give him one

of yours." Yes! a good old sort was Will Smith of the Brocklesby.

One of the most remarkable men in the hunt was old Tom Brooks, who, although he rode 14 or 15 stone, was very hard to beat when hounds ran. He never wore socks or stockings, and I don't believe ever felt cold in his feet; directly he came in from walking or riding, he used to pull off his boots and put his feet in cold water. Tom had two sons, the younger of whom, Harry, was educated at the Bluecoat School, and during his holidays he used to ride an old grey pony, and in his long blue coat, yellow stockings, and bare head he was good to see a long way off; but he often went the shortest way with hounds, and is now as good a rider and as smartly turned out as any one in the hunt. Old Jack Skipworth is still to the front; no man has seen a more varied life than he, and many good stories are told of him when he served as a volunteer in Don Pedro's army in Portugal. I never knew a man so passionately devoted to fox-hunting and all that pertains to "the animal"; it used to be said that there was not a litter of cubs laid down, that the Captain did not know of and keep his eye on, till they were fit to take care of themselves. He was also a first-class steeplechase-rider.

The finest specimen of a British yeoman I ever came across, was one of our tenants, E. Davy, of Worlaby. I did not make his acquaintance till early in the sixties, when he took a farm of Squire Corbett's of 1500 acres, at a rent of £3000 a year; but I soon found out he was a wonder. He weighed then about 20 st. and was fond of having a look at the hounds; but in his younger days, when he could ride 12 st. 7 lb. at a pinch, few men could beat him over a country between the flags, and many a score times have I set the old boy going on his favourite subject. He had bought a young horse, three years old, when grazing in a pasture, and, having broken and backed him, gave him the name of Gaylad. As soon as he found out his extraordinary powers of jumping and staying under heavy weights, he started on a tour round the principal steeplechase-meetings, such as Newport Pagnell, Ailesbury, Brixworth, and many others; all the fences being natural, no trimming and cutting down, but simply a flag stuck in the hairiest place in the fence, which you had to leave on the left or right, according to the formation of the course. Gaylad (he used to say) was never beaten but once, and that was when a friend rode him (I fancy it was in a sweepstakes of 100 sovs. each) at Rugby, and ever afterwards he rode the

horse himself, until he sold him to Elmore for 1000 guineas, and a hundred more if he won the Liverpool; and this he did in 1842 (at this time it was a sweepstakes, 12 st. each for all ages), with Tom Oliver on his back, and the fire with which he used to narrate the leading features of that race was well worth listening to, and so thought many of my friends whom I have taken over to have a chat with the old gentleman.

Elmore ran Lottery as well as Gaylad, and he backed Lottery to win a bigger stake than he did the other. That paragon of steeplechase-riders, Jim Mason, rode Lottery, and Tom Oliver, Gaylad. Both horses stood up, and on jumping into the course by the Canal Bridge, were only separated from each other by Seventy-four (a grey horse, I think he was). Well! Lottery was leading till close to the last fence, when Jim Mason found his horse tiring, and he took off his cap and waved it to Tom Oliver to come on if he could, and, as old Davy expressed it, "He did come like a shot out of a gun," and Gaylad won the race and the old boy's extra hundred. But no description on paper can touch the old man's spirited recital: he used to froth at the mouth, and bring his huge fist down on the table with such emphasis, that it made the glasses hop about (for we generally

had a "little cold with" when this subject was broached).

Poor old Davy, he died in 1891, and I miss him much; he was a real honourable, energetic, and clever man, and as good an agriculturalist as ever paid harvest-wages. He was fortunate in having married one of the best of women, and their produce—four sons and a daughter—have taken after their parents. The pick of the basket now farms the 1500 acres his father did, but the rent has dropped from £3000 to £2000 a year, and not far short of £8000 has been laid out in bricks and mortar on that farm alone—a loss of 33 per cent. in income, let alone the money sunk in improvements. But I must hark back to the hunting-field again. I used to get a day now and again with the Southwold and Burton packs, with both of which I have had some very good fun. Lord Henry Bentinck, who was then master of the Burton, was very keen, and rode some very good horses, besides possessing plenty of them.

He used to put up at the White Hart at Lincoln, and was a cynical old boy, a fast friend and a good hater. I am afraid I annoyed him very much one very hot spring day, when hounds had run a fox to ground in a big woodland near Market Rasen; for when they began to draw again, the blessed dogs

languidly trailed along in lines, one after each other wherever the cover was thinnest, and presently, coming to some old gravel pits half full of water, pretty well every hound in the pack plunged in, little caring for the solicitations of their huntsman to "roust him out," or "have at him." So, as business was very slack, I innocently asked if any gentleman had a pack of cards about him, so that we might vary the entertainment. Alas! my ill-advised remark was repeated to Lord Henry, and he did give me a black look or two, I can tell you, and, *sotto voce*, reckoned me up right bitterly—as so good and generous a sportsman had every right to do. He was a great loss to the country when he passed away. The young squire of Blankney was his successor, and right well did Harry Chaplin keep up the prestige of the pack, both on the flags and in the field, and few men of his weight rode better to hounds. I also got a day or two occasionally with Lord Galway, a man after my own heart, the very keenest either in the saddle or with the gun that I ever met, and his way of talking reminded me much of George Payne, and that is a compliment I could pay to no other man.

Two or three times my wife and I went to stay with Peel of Bryn-y-Pys, my good old pal of Eton and Oxford days, a first-class host, and a good

rider, and we had some pleasant days with Sir Watkin's hounds, then hunted by old Walker, a typical man of his craft and a daring horseman in that peculiar country, as well as a charming old boy to have a chat with. During one of these visits we varied our sport by a day's coursing on some pastures beside the Dee, and, as bad luck would have it, I lost a nice mare.

Not long before, I had been down to some country races on a common near Hungerford, and took a great fancy to a good-looking mare that won the Yeomanry race, and I bought her for £130 and took her down with me to Bryn-y-Pys. On this afternoon, whilst the dogs were being put into the slips, I proposed to a friend that we should try the speed of our nags to a given point some three or four hundred yards off, and away we started. My new purchase won comfortably; but I had no sooner pulled her up than she gave a lurch or two, and, before I could make out what was the matter, down she fell on her side giving my head a nasty jar on the turf. As soon as I could extricate my leg from under her, I jumped up; but the poor mare never moved—she must have burst some blood-vessel internally. I got a friendly farmer to put my saddle and bridle in his trap, and walked to the Dee side (which was in flood) and

a man in a coracle offered to take me across, and, as it would save a trudge of a mile or two to the nearest bridge, I stepped into the frail barque and sat as still as a little mouse (?). Just as we got within 20 or 30 feet of the opposite bank the coracle began whirling round and round, and we found we had run on some old submerged stump or snag, and fully expected to see it peep through the tarpaulin that covers the framework of this peculiar craft. However, by dint of shifting our weight, at the imminent danger of a good ducking, we swung clear, and I was precious glad to find myself on *terra firma* again, though much crestfallen at having lost my poor mare.

When I got back to Elsham, the squire, in a most handsome manner, gave me a cheque for £100 towards buying another nag, which was an ebullition of generous feeling on his part that I had not given him credit for, and I accepted it as a cheering omen that he was getting fond of his son-in-law. I am not quite sure I hadn't hinted that "I had bought the mare for his daughter to ride." Well! you know in those days we shared everything—a very cosy arrangement, and one that suited me right well.

CHAPTER II.

I Begin to be Short of Money—Some of the Reasons why—Take to Racing as a Means of Remedying the Evil—A Few Words on “The Art of Self-Defence”—The Fight for the Championship—There and Back again for £5—The Special Train—At the Ring Side—Contrast between the Men—The Fight—Police—A False Alarm, but Ring broken up—My Impressions as to the Probable Result had the Battle been Fought out—My Wife lets the Cat out of the Bag—General Enthusiasm and Interest to Learn Details of the Fight—The *Times* Triumvirate—A Few Words about Evans’—The New Club—The National Sporting Club—Slavin and Jackson—A Genuine Display—High Price of Seats—Room Completely Filled with Spectators—Victory of Jackson.

WITH a fresh chapter I commence to record a state of affairs that I fear is by no means novel or fresh with me, namely, that about this time I began to get very hard up, although with our joint income of £1700 a year I admit we had no right to be, seeing that we could stop as long as we liked at Elsham; but, of course, that meant a very quiet, not to say dull, life, and a certain restraint inseparable from living in another person’s house. Then, again, it was imperatively necessary that we should have a house

in London every now and again, for when our first-born, Frank, was nearly two, his little sister Polly arrived to keep him company; well, you couldn't take a decent house for the season in London under £500, don't you know. Then you couldn't expect your young and lovely wife to drive about on fine days couped up in a brougham; so she must have a park phaeton and a pair of nice-actioned horses to drive in it. Then, as she was such a perfect rider, she must of necessity do Rotten Row on as exquisite a hack as her doting hubby could find; so he gave £250 for one, and, when that began to lose its action, £300 was pulled out for another.

Of course I might have done as many rich husbands (I am ashamed to say) do—mount my lady on a forty pounder, warranted to hammer up and down the Row in the morning, and trail the brougham in the afternoon, and *vice versa*; but I was proud of my girl's equitation, and without doubt she and her hack were graceful ornaments to the Row. These almost necessary expenses played havoc with our limited income, so I felt in duty bound to try and increase the balance at my banker's, or perhaps more accurately speaking to diminish the deficit, and the only means I could hit upon for acquiring wealth legitimately, was by giving more time and

attention to the "Sport of Kings,"* and so it came to pass that we paid many pleasant visits to friends who lived in the neighbourhood of Newmarket, and either took a house ourselves, or shared one with others for Ascot. Every July for some years we occupied the same rooms at the Bedford at Brighton, for Goodwood and the Sussex fortnight, and merry times we had and no mistake; if I won we spent it, and if (as sometimes must happen) I lost, well, I insured my life at three per cent. and borrowed a bit of ready on it at the office at five—a most legitimate financial arrangement as all must admit; but eight per cent. must, sooner or later (sooner for choice), seriously curtail one's income.

It stands to reason (no query about that) that, if you *do* bet, it must be much safer to back your own horses that you ought to know all about, than to wager on other people's; so I invested a small sum, as a commencement, on a plater or two, and then gradually increased my stud in quantity and quality during the twenty odd years I owned racehorses; till in 1884 I got broke, and have remained jolly well *cassé* ever since. Some of my experiences as an owner I will try and recollect later.

Though I may shock the refined feelings of my

* Mr. Jorrocks claims hunting, not racing, to be the "Sport of Kings."—EDITOR.

fair readers, I purpose now to touch on the championship of the world. Up to the sixties, England could claim to be *facile princeps* at every athletic sport, in the nineties we are out of it altogether. Can the advance in education be the cause? I rather lean to the notion myself. In my time I have seen many real good men with their fists, and have taken a lot of interest in the "noble art of self-defence," and though never a flyer myself, yet I was useful, and learnt enough to imbue me with sufficient confidence that in any ordinary riot, I could take my own part with my bunch of fives, and that therefore I had no need to carry a revolver, dagger, or even a heavy stick—the latter a cumbersome article which in a row you might drop or have wrested from you; but, your knuckles you cannot leave behind, nor can they be borrowed of you.

Talking of a row, I mean where the vigilant "bobby" has got it into his head that, he ought to interfere with your liberty and lock you up, or run you in. Now, when you find the "man in blue" close on you, and you are desirous of getting a good start and trusting to your speed and knowledge of the locality to get you out of the scrape, at this exciting juncture, I say, use your knowledge of the art; of course you must not mark the "hofficer," but just up with your hands and feint

with your left at his tummy—he is pretty sure to bring his head forward; and, even if he don't do what I suggest, try with your right to knock his hat off—it's 100 to 5 he stoops to pick it up—then give him a good shove (mind, don't assault the officer!), and before his stomach reaches the ground, start off at your best, and with luck you ought to get round one, if not two, corners before the custodian of the peace has righted himself, and put his (may be squashed) hat on again. I am not guessing, because I have tried it; but then it was in the fifties, when the police wore tall hats and I was speedy; but I am wandering from my topic.

On the 17th April, 1860, Tom Sayers, champion of England, aged 34, weight about 11 stone, height about 5 feet 10 inches, was matched against J. Heenan (the "Benicia Boy"), aged 26, weight 13 stone, and height 6 feet 1½ inches, for the championship of the world; and this battle was really an international one, and it created immense excitement in both hemispheres, not only amongst sporting men, but also amongst the most refined and highly cultured of all degrees and both sexes, to very many of whom the term "prize fight" was up to that time associated with everything that was most blackguardly and disgusting. Well, as I had been to many merry mills, and was not

averse to seeing two well-trained boxers try conclusions (that is an inoffensive term I flatter myself), I, and three other pals, made up a party to go together wherever we were told; and right well the secret of the rendezvous was kept—all the information we could obtain was that, a train would leave London Bridge 'twixt three and four on the morning of the fight. You may be sure we were there in good time, and provided with a nice little hamper of food and liquid, calculated to sustain us for a twenty-four hours' outing, if necessary.

We ensconced ourselves in a first-class carriage, having each paid £5 for a ticket with the somewhat vague inscription on it "There and Back"; and we were told not to trouble our heads or ask any questions at the stations we might have to stop at; but that when our train pulled up at some nice quiet spot, not one hundred miles off, we should see the ropes and stakes duly set up, and were to hasten to the ringside and secure good places. When our train arrived at Redhill Junction, we were shunted off the main line and found ourselves steaming towards Farnborough, just short of which, the train stopped, and we all bundled out. After clambering over a fence or two, we took our places at the selected spot, the ring being pitched on a nice level bit of turf on the Aldershot side

of the line. Our train had been dodging about for some time, as far as I recollect, and it was past midday before the men appeared.

No time was lost in turning them out ready for the fray, and, gentle reader, you won't be surprised to hear that, as the day was warm, they mutually agreed to dispense with any gloves, and, lest they might spoil their clothes, they stripped to their waists. Wonderful fit and well-trained they both looked and felt. The contrast between the two men was most remarkable. Heenan was a perfect model of a big man, his skin was as white as a lily and he looked delicate; his only fault (for a fighting man) was his too pretty waist, he lacked power across his loins. Sayers was as brown as a berry and looked as hard as nails, was square across the shoulders, and much more powerful as to his loins than his rival. Then, again, Heenan was three to four inches taller, two stone heavier, and eight years younger than Sayers. I can recollect quite well now, that a feeling of dread came over me when the men stood up and shook hands, and on the referee calling time, put themselves in position for the first round.

One reasoned after this wise: could our little man, wonder though he was, ever reach the stranger's

optics, and would not his age, and the hard life he had led, tell terribly against him? On the other hand, one was cheered with the knowledge that he had licked as big, and as heavy men, on several occasions, also, that out of his fourteen battles he had only been beaten once, and then by the very cleverest of his day (Nat Langham), in addition to which our champion had proved himself the very gamest of the game; we had moreover to learn how the stranger would take his gruel, and of that he was sure to have a good dose.

“Time! Order, please!” The battle has begun. Sayers when sparring stooped a bit and kept his guard very high; Heenan stood bolt upright and kept his hands low, and his arms playing loosely from the shoulder. Wonderful to relate, Sayers seemed to have little difficulty in getting over Heenan’s guard, and his blows seemed to have more powder behind them than the big man’s—at any rate they marked the softer texture of the “Benicia Boy’s” delicate skin soon causing his eyes to look very queer; but Heenan was very busy, and every now and then got home a swinging blow. It was in guarding one of these heavy lunges that Sayers’ right arm was seriously injured, in fact rendered almost useless. At the end of two hours it was a toss-up which man would win. Heenan

was nearly blind, though strong on his legs ; while Sayers was getting very distressed and groggy on his pins—suddenly a cry of police was raised and the ring was broken up.

It now became a case of *sauve qui peut !* I don't believe there was any cause for alarm, as only a solitary "bobby" hove in sight, more out of curiosity than any other motive (not sure he was not birds-nesting), but all skedaddled towards the train that was waiting for us on the line, and, as I was running across a meadow, I saw Heenan tumble—there was quite a small grip or surface drain in the field—but, though his legs were all right, his eyes were bunged up, and over he went. This ended the international championship in a not altogether satisfactory manner.

My own impression was that, had it lasted another ten minutes, Sayers would have been unable to come to the scratch ; but, on the other hand, if he could, Heenan would have been too blind to find him. So it was given a draw, and both men were presented with a belt ; Sayers resigned the championship and never fought again. A subscription was raised for him and a goodly sum subscribed, with which a life-annuity was purchased for him ; but, though his physique and pluck were undeniable, he had no sort of self-control, and

couldn't say "no" when offered a drink by well-meaning but idiotic admirers. I once met him in Trafalgar Square, and, seeing how dicky he looked, I expostulated with him and told him he would soon kill himself if he didn't keep his elbow down. His reply was, "How can I? How many sorts do you think I have taken between Saint Martin's Church and Charing Cross? Why, twenty-two!" And so the gamest and most resolute man when in condition, became the softest and most irresolute creature when out of employment. He passed away, and it is the old price—1000 to 5—we ne'er shall look upon his like again.

Now, to end the story of that championship day. We did get "There and Back," and seldom have I been more tired. Nevertheless, I had to escort my wife to dine with some real swells in Prince's Gate, so braced myself up for the job; but as I mounted the stairs to the drawing-room, full of highly-cultured males and delicate-minded females "all in the book," I felt I must disguise my whereabouts for the past eighteen hours, and fondly thought I had squared my better half not to mention the subject. But, no sooner had we entered the richly-furnished apartment, brilliant with light and the sparkle of jewels, and redolent with the fragrance of the choicest exotics (quite different from our "There and Back")

stuffy saloon), than I with the greatest astonishment heard Lady "High Church" asking Lord "Wool-sack" if it was true that *dear* Tom Sayers had had his arm broken by that horrid huge American. The Bishop of "Farnborough" also was being congratulated by Lady "Suffering" that the championship had been brought off in his immediate neighbourhood, and as, of course, he was there, could he tell her all about it, &c. &c. Then I heard my wife let the cat out, when our hostess told her she was dying to hear all particulars, and was her hubby, the Colonel, there? I was immediately surrounded and catechised in the most searching manner by all the women in the room, and had not his Lordship (our host) in the most authoritative manner seized Lady "High Church" and half-dragged her down to dinner, our *tortue claire* would have been cold and spoilt. Yes! it was very funny to note the enormous interest that championship produced, even amongst the most namby-pamby and simpering of females.

There was a long leading article in that most proper of all papers, the *Times*, on the day after the fight, and so high and full flavoured were the encomiums heaped on the combatants and the noble art generally, that it was currently reported by those in the know in Paternoster Row, that the proprietor and editor were going into strict training. Doctor

Russell was to see fair play and hold the watch, and, if he could get rid of 3 st. of adipose tissue, he was to take on the winner, on condition that neither the merry twinkle of his left eye, nor the humorous wrinkle of his dexter orbit, were to be in any way interfered with by the gouty or mutton fist of his antagonist. However, the stakes were never made good, and the *tempora triumvirate* kept their tempers, so the temptation evaporated.

Talking of stakes, isn't it remarkable that the two best gladiators in the world were content in 1860 to risk their reputations, and, maybe, the alteration of their profiles, for £400 without gloves, and now in 1893 the pick of the present race of sparrers wont put on their gloves unless they have from £1000 to £5000 offered them? March of education indeed! why, now a man with a fair knowledge of the noble art can earn more money with his gloved hands in an hour, than most senior wranglers do in a decade, though, instead of putting their gloves on, they burn the midnight oil with a wet towel wrapped round their aching brows. I have not yet (1893) given up an occasional peep at the ropes and stakes now so deftly fixed in the boarded floor of the Covent Garden building, that once was popular under the name of "Evans'," and renowned for melody of a very varied description, and where I have enjoyed

many a real hearty laugh and a toothsome supper at the same time. I don't know—worse luck!—where you can now bring off the double event—do you?

Subsequently, this same structure was well known as the New Club, and there, many a first-class concert and finished charades were enjoyed by the upper crust of the fashionable world; but that speculation having failed, it is now the home of the National Sporting Club, and though the society there (all male) is a little mixed, yet the boxing competitions, and an occasional contest are well worth seeing, and wonderfully well conducted. It was there last year I witnessed P. Jackson (the coloured champion) and F. Slavin, a real well-matched pair of heavy weights, spar for a very large purse, and a rattling good show it was; the amphitheatre was full to repletion (many of the best seats fetched £25 that evening). It was a real genuine display of boxing, and ended in the victory of the darky, who perhaps ought this day to be champion of the world, and a very civil, well-spoken man is Peter Jackson. Now I won't bother my readers any more about boxing, though personally I hope to witness for years to come, many a good set-to, and wish the noble art of self-defence may prosper and be long appreciated.

CHAPTER III.

A Trip to Baden—Paris *en route*—The Board of Green Cloth—My Wife's System of Backing Number 31—Vultures of the Tables—No Luck—My Notes Diminish Daily—The Duke of Hamilton and his Team—Baden Steeplechases—Vicomte Talon—A Real Good Rider and a Plucky One—The Baths at Loesche—A Shooting-party—Gorgeous Costumes the Order of the Day—*Le Roi de Chasse*—A Few Words about Pigeon-shooting—The Old Red House, Battersea—Frank Heathcote—Beeswing, Ancient and Modern—A Tough Antagonist in Sir Hedworth Williamson—Sixteen All—A Lucky Kill—Sir Richard Sutton—Ninety-two out of One Hundred Pheasants with Flint and Steel—The Present Duke of Devonshire Wrecks my Book on the Pigeon Handicap by Winning it—Nice Odds, 100 to 2 Twice—Hornsey Wood Built over—Gun Club, Shepherd's Bush.

As both self and wife were fond of seeing life, and, not averse to a turn at the tables or a peep at the board of green cloth, we decided a trip to Baden. Baden would be a nice change for us; so, leaving the turtle-doves, or two young Astleys, under the supervision of their grandpapa, who was highly honoured by the confidence we reposed in him, we started in August, soon after the expiration of the Sussex fortnight.

Of course we travelled *viâ* Paris, where we spent

a few days and looked up our haunts of '58, and duly arriving at Baden, we took possession of some pleasant rooms in one of its best hotels. We soon found that a fair sprinkling of our friends were located at this gay and idle rendezvous, and we made up many a pleasant little dinner-party at the Restaurant of the Kürsaal, adjourning afterwards *en masse* to the spacious rooms then dedicated to *trente et quarante*, and roulette. As our capital was limited and we were new to the use of the rake, we began by staking only small sums; but as our insight into the merits of these games of chance became sharpened, we put down our money with more nerve and dash, and, gaining confidence in the croupiers, occasionally left our winnings down for a run; but, deary me, though we (as Lord Tommy once described his doings at roulette) played right well, yet we had no luck, although, fortunately, we didn't lose much; nevertheless we could not make a pile.

My good lady had discovered a certainty (at least it was *almost* a certainty, and I don't mind telling you the secret): she would sit tight till she saw number 13 come up at roulette, and then dash down her coin on number 31,* and, curiously enough,

* History repeats itself, as I believe that the Bank at Monte Carlo was broken in this very manner in April (1894).—ED.

she brought it off several times; but, from experience, I can affirm that even that well thought out, though not very complicated, idea, is not good enough to bet upon. Of course, some of our friends, old hands at the game, confided to us systems by which it was next to impossible to lose; but most of these good things require an amount of capital to carry them out which we didn't possess, and I confess that neither my brain nor my purse were ever equal to the strain. It was very amusing to watch the twitching countenances of some nervous players, and the phlegmatic *sangfroid* of others; what irritated me most was the cool impudence of some of the old girls, who from time to time I found placing themselves next to me.

I presume they put me down as *un Monsieur très doux*, not to say *bon garçon*, well suited to their little game, which was simplicity itself. One or other of these old hens would wait till I staked, then, just as the croupier was declaring *le jeu est fait*, she would pretend to stake too, but never left it down; if I won and was being paid, she calmly raked in my money, and when I mildly protested that she was appropriating my coin, she broke out into a paroxysm of fury, and in strident tones declared, "*Mais, dit-on, c'est à moi, Monsieur; absolument c'est à moi,*" and, if I didn't give in, she in-

dignantly appealed to her accomplice, "*Mais, Marie, n'est-ce pas c'est à moi? Vous me l'avez vu placer là dessus?*" and t'other old hen promptly cackled her corroboration; and as I confess to being very timid when having anything to do with aged ladies—especially those of any foreign nationality—I for peace and quietness' sake usually resigned my winnings to these old harpies. But, sometimes, the croupier, who knew well the *jeu de ces vieilles*, came to my rescue and declared he noticed me stake; but not so my persecutors. These croupiers were not half bad fellows, and much appreciated an act of honesty.

It was the year Blackdown won the Goodwood Stakes. I had been a good winner that Sussex fortnight, and, having a mind to let some of my superfluous cash (what a mockery that sounds now I am so wonderful short of ready!) have a run. On starting for Baden I took with me twenty crisp £100 notes, and felt pretty sure (not certain, mind you) that, with a good bank I could play, "old Harry" with the management. Well, the very first night I played I put down one of my £100 notes and declared *le moitié* on the *rouge*; up it came, and the croupier raked in my note to see its value. After turning it over and over, and examining it most minutely (at one moment I fancied he was

trying to get at its worth by smelling it) he said, "*C'est trois cents livres sterling, n'est-ce pas, Monsieur ?*" "*Non ; seulement un cent,*" I replied. He, not liking to own his ignorance, coaxingly averred, "*Mais non, c'est plus que ça,*" when suddenly one of the old hens above mentioned gave me a nudge, and with a severe look whispered : "*Mais oui, Monsieur, il a raison. Soyez vous tranquille, il vous payera cent cinquante.*" But, though I fully appreciated that Satan in the disguise of this old hen was at my right hand, I rebuked and bade the said old hen go to Gehenna, while I firmly demanded : "*Cinquante livres seulement,*" which was paid, the croupier bowing with benign expression the while, and he evidently put me down as a *brave sabreur*.*

Well, when play ceased for that night I found I had several rouleaux of louis, and, wishing to change them for one or two of my notes which had strayed into the *banque*, I straightway tapped at the door of the bureau, where the croupiers were making up their gains, upon which an attendant opened the door and authoritatively informed me that under no plea could any one enter there ; but I insisted, and my friend the croupier above mentioned appeared, and with many bows invited me to come in, and

* There may possibly be some, who would hardly deem the foregoing sentences pure Parisian French. It is not *always* spoken at Monte Carlo, as many can testify.—ED.

most civilly exchanged my louis for my £100 notes ; and this exchange went on for several nights. Still, my notes were gradually engulfed as luck turned against me, and soon I had nothing to barter for them. I finally kept the last of my twenty, with which to pay our return journey home. It was annoying to leave these nice crisp bits of paper behind me ; but I fondly hoped that, once back again at Newmarket, there were lots more of the lost sheep to be found on that jolly old heath.

Play was not the only amusement at Baden, for there was some capital racing at Iffetzheim, a very pretty course about five miles off ; and the display of brilliant equipages in, and on which, pretty well two-thirds of the visitors and well-to-do denizens of the Duchy drove to the racecourse, was a wonderful sight. It was on that road that I first saw the present Duke of Hamilton ; he was driving a splendid team of four white stallions with flying manes and tails, a real eye-opener. How folks would stare if that good Duke would only give us a show with a similar turn out, at a meet of the coaches at the Magazine in Hyde Park !

The steeplechase course was very peculiar. On part of it, the horses almost disappeared from view in a broad track cut through the standing maize,

and about half a mile from the finish the horses had to descend a very steep bank on to the flat race course; therefore it required fine nerve on the part of the rider to send his half-beaten horse safely down this miniature precipice. One of the Princes Esterhazy—a real good sort—rode the winner of the big steeplechase that year, and his success I put down to the pluck with which he chanced that dangerous descent. We—the English division—had great hopes of winning with old Bridegroom, who had won the Liverpool, and belonged to a cheery and good sportsman “Cherry Angel,” who was at Eton with me; but the peculiarities of the course puzzled our horse, and we lost a lot of money on him.

Vicomte Talon, the very pluckiest foreigner I ever knew, rode in the Grand Steeplechase; he had been ill for some time, but was determined to ride. He had only arrived at Baden that morning, and felt so bad he had to lie down in the jockeys’ dressing-room till it was time to weigh, and, though we all tried to dissuade him, he mounted and rode the course, but was terribly exhausted when he got off his horse. I had known him well in the Crimea, where he was on the French Headquarters Staff; he rode in several of our race-meetings out there, and no cheerier comrade ever lived. I met him

afterwards at Cheltenham Steeplechases, and that day he had one of the most frightful croppers I ever witnessed : his horse hit some stiff posts and rails and fairly rolled over him, and, though insensible when carried to the weighing-room, he came to in time to ride again that afternoon. Poor Talon ! he was the best "Froggy" I ever knew, and so say all of us.

On one of our trips to Baden (I find from a letter I sent home in 1863), we journeyed *viâ* Paris and Geneva to Chamounix, and there took a ramble which I thus describe : "The next day we went up the Montanvert, and crossed the Mer de Glace, a rather perilous performance for ladies, as you have to walk along narrow ridges of ice, with deep crevasses each side of you, and occasionally mount or descend by steps cut in the ice ; thence we returned by the Mauvais Pas, a path in the face of a declivitous rock where you held on by a rope, and so reached Chamounix again. Started next day over the Tête Noir to Martigny, and caught the train for Vevey, fourteen hours' journey, and jolly stiff we both were ; however, the Hôtel de Trois Couronnes at Vevey is charming, and so we stopped there two days, remaining over Sunday, and I rowed the wife to Château Chillon and back, and looked up my old quarters at the Maison Puenzieux, where

I lodged in 1847, and next day went by train to Sion, and then drove to the baths of Loesche, and funny baths they are !

“ Next morning, very early, we were shown into a dark sort of cave, and felt our way into a large pool of muddy lukewarm water, with rude stumps stuck up here and there for seats. After paddling about in this dimly lighted bath, we dressed and started at 6.30 A.M., and ascended the Gemmi Pass, a wonderful path cut zigzag in the face of a huge steep rock, up which the wife far outpaced me, and while I was blowing hard *en bas* I saw her *en haut*, looking more like a rosy apple suspended over one's head in a tree, than a matron struggling up a precipitous rock.

“ We walked on six hours to Kandersteg, then took trap to Interlaken, where we arrived at 8 P.M. (a fairish day's work), and shall go on by Lucerne and Bâle to Baden, spend a few days there, then down the Rhine to Cologne, and home by the middle of September.”

During one of these visits to Baden, I was asked by Monsieur Benazet, the lessee of the Kürsaal and receiver of the coin realised at the tables, to take part in a day's shooting he had organised in the neighbourhood, and a most amusing day we spent. On mustering at the appointed spot, we

numbered some twenty guns (over than under), and many of the *haute noblesse* were there, and not a few of these *grands chasseurs* were splendidly attired in costumes a long way in front of any I had seen before—more picturesque than serviceable, for the most part. Much pains had been bestowed on their headgear, for every hat or cap was bedecked with some trophy of the chase—pig's tails, ears, and bristles were *de rigueur*, and tit bits of the wolf, badger, fox, and roe-deer were, together with selections from peacocks' and pheasants' tails, evidently much prized.

Several of the most distinguished were attended by jägers or keepers, each of whom was a perfect study, for much money and thought had been bestowed on their venatic appearance. I felt humble, yet confident; humble, because my boating jacket, flannel trousers and straw hat, borrowed gun and freshly caught boy to carry my cartridges, did not harmonise with the gaudy get up of my brother shooters, and confident because I inwardly despised the killing powers of these picturesque sportsmen. A vast army of beaters had been collected, and they were deployed into a long line, stretching over a large tract of country, consisting principally of cultivated land, cropped with maize, tobacco, pulse, &c. As soon as the

guns were posted, the advance was sounded by bugle-call; the game was soon astir, and the fusilade began.

Partridges and hares were fairly plentiful, and on the beaters coming up, we guns were conducted to the most *recherché* luncheon; at which I arrived later than the rest, as I had been hunting for a wounded partridge, and as I joined my comrades, the chairman (a tremendous swell) was giving the toast of the *roi de chasse*, that being the title of the party who had killed the greatest number of hares. As I was taking my seat, my neighbour asked me how many I had killed, and on my producing a handful of hare-scuts from my pocket, he counted them over, and, jumping up, excitedly informed the company I was the veritable *roi de chasse*, and my health was drunk with much enthusiasm; though I fancied there were a few of the tiptop and highly caparisoned sportsmen who didn't quite relish being beaten by the party in boating-jacket and flannels. We had another drive in the afternoon, and so ended a most enjoyable day. Now, good-bye to Baden, and though I confess I never returned from there a winner, yet, what with the climate, the racing, the play, and the many curiosities of a mixed society, I always left it with regret.

As I have been describing my luck with the

German hares, it may not be out of place to touch on an almost milder sport, but one which requires more nerve and quickness of aim—shooting pigeons from the trap. I had only been a few times to the Old Red House, Battersea, where all the best shooters of the day were accustomed to try their prowess at the trapped blue rock, and where the shooting principally consisted of matches at a certain number of birds for large bets; but when the Old Red House was done away with, and its site became part of Battersea Park, the venue was changed to Hornsey Wood, and there the principal attraction became large sweepstakes, and the good, moderate, and bad shots, were supposed to be all brought to a level by the astute handicapping of old Frank Heathcote (a near relative of the squire of that ilk), who then lived at the Durdans at Epsom, and was a well-known jovial and eccentric sportsman, who kept the Surrey Staghounds, and owned some racehorses; the best of them was the modern Beeswing (not to be confounded with the famous mare of that name) who won the Chester Cup for him, as well as several other good races.

Old Frank Heathcote was very successful at adjusting the distances at the Great Derby Dove Handicap of May 28th, 1863, the scale ranging

from thirty-one down to twenty-one yards from the five traps. Writing from memory, I think there were sixty or seventy shooters. I stood at twenty-four or twenty-five yards, and was not well in at that; but, favoured by good luck (and some very useful second barrels), when I had killed twelve birds consecutively, only the present Sir Hedworth Williamson and myself had not missed, and we proceeded to shoot off the tie. There was plenty of chaff and mirthful badinage, but it was a real serious business for me, for I was just then suffering acutely from a more than ordinary attack of impecuniosity, and besides the handsome sweepstakes (I fancy it was £5 each), I had started a pretty little £100 book, on which I had got round and a bit over, having taken a liberty with some of the crocks I didn't fancy; so mine was not a square but a round book, you understand? Much to my satisfaction my rival proposed that we should divide. "Not me," I said, "I am going for the big money, my boy. Fire away!" and the poor doves had a bad time of it. We both killed the next four. I had an awful squeak with one of my birds, which looked all over like topping the boundary fence, but hit it and fell back dead, or, at any rate, was gathered.

Sixteen all, and up went the Northern Bart. (with a lot too much confidence to please me) for the seventeenth shot, and out of the wrong trap for him, darted as slippery a little blue rock as ever cooed on a roof, and though slightly tickled, that dear little bird made its escape, and I grassed mine, and so won the handicap, killing seventeen birds consecutively—not a bad performance in those days, and, of course, there is no knowing how many I *could* have accounted for, don't you know?

Whether pigeons have deteriorated or not is doubtful, but it is quite certain that there are plenty of men who can beat my score now, and men of all nations, too; but arms of precision have wonderfully improved in the last thirty years. All the same we had an old keeper at home, who solemnly declared to me more than once, that he loaded for old Sir Richard Sutton on one 1st of February, when he killed ninety-two cock pheasants out of one hundred shots, with a flint-and-steel Joe Manton, at one stand at the end of a fir-plantation at Elsham—how is that for high? I was not always so fortunate with my pigeon book, for well I recollect laying the present Duke of Devonshire 100 to 2 against himself, and on his challenging me to do it twice, I promptly acquiesced, thinking I had caught a flat; but it was

a tartar for my little volume of only £100, for he won the handicap, and that was my first introduction to the statesman, whom Old England now honours, as the most disinterested and high-minded of all her sons.

When Hornsey Wood was built over, pigeon-shooting was revived at Hurlingham, and the Gun Club at Shepherd's Bush, and I used frequently to take my chance at the former pleasant grounds; but gradually resigned the unequal contest to younger and quicker shots.

CHAPTER IV.

Harking Back a few Years—How I took to Racing—Famous Horses I have Seen—Goodwood in 1849—Blink Bonny and the Leger—A Good Investment for Metropolitan and Chester Cup—A Dead Heat between Three for the Cesarewitch—George Fordham—Extraordinary Performance of Sweet Sauce—The Croagh Patrick Objection—The Stewards' Decision, Nine Months after the Race—I become an Owner of Racehorses—My First Purchase, Hesper—Richard Drewitt of Lewes—One of the Past Race of Trainers—Little Wonder, an Early Foal—Mrs. Drewitt and her Bonnets—George Fordham's Merits both as Jockey and Man—Trials at Lewes—Fordham's Loyalty to his Master—Hesper's Performances—Levity and Neptunus—The Grass Widow pulls me through—Farfalla—Add to my Stud—Disposing of a Tout—Blackdown's Trial for the Goodwood Stakes—Backing the Favourite—Blackdown Wins!—"Gruncher" Greville—&c.

I MUST now try and write, as concisely as I can, my varied experiences of the sport I like best of all, namely, horse-racing. How I first took to it I know not, for none of my ancestors that I know of ever owned a racehorse; and though my father was wonderful fond of the animal, yet he abhorred any allusion to racing, and always declared that a race-course was the sink of iniquity. Why he was so bitter against it I never knew; may be it was on



Forham, Newmarket photo.

W. J. Langham & Co.

J. S. Stey...

account of having been swindled out of a considerable sum of money in his youthful days by the original Goody Levi, at a small country meeting which was held on the downs near Alresford, perhaps on the very same ground now so well known as the training-quarters of dear old Arthur Yates. That money was not lost in betting, but at a little game of chance with dice, which at that time was much in vogue where sportsmen congregated, and as the races were few and far between, they made out the time with a main of cocks, or by shaking the box. Be that as it may, the governor was rooked, and ever afterwards was full against racing.

I don't believe I was ever on a racecourse, barring a hurried rush to Ascot when I was at Eton, till after I joined the Guards in 1848; and I think the first time I did a four-day meeting comfortably, was when quartered at Chichester, and we entertained a real cheery party in barracks for the Goodwood week. Ah! those were jolly days, and no error.

We will skip over the intervening years till we come to 1856, the year I returned from the Crimea. When at the Houghton meeting at Newmarket I set eyes on the hardest and gamest bit of horseflesh that ever was shod—for he was not often plated—

namely, Fisherman, by Heron, and owned by Tom Parr, who had a real good time that week, winning the Cambridgeshire with Malacca, and the Free Handicap with Fisherman. Here I must note that the Cambridgeshire Trial Plate (and it was a trial in those days) of 50 sovereigns was contested by 22 starters. But to return to Fisherman: he started thirty-four times and won twenty-four—twelve consecutively, straight off the reel; in 1857 he started thirty-five times and won twenty-four; in 1858 he started thirty-two times and won twenty-one; and in 1859, twelve times and won twice. To sum up his performances he started 113 times and won 71; these figures include walks over, and mind you, these races were at all distances, and run on every description of course. Moreover, he very often walked or trotted from one racecourse to another by road, for the poor old horse had a hard master, and it seems incredible that this good game animal ended his days in the Antipodes, where he sired a long list of good winners. It was wicked to let the good old slave leave England; anyhow, I look upon it as a reproach to English sportsmen.

In 1857 Blink Bonny won both Derby and Oaks, and, to show the difficulty of handicapping horses by their performances in the book, Blink Bonny in the

Oaks beat Impérieuse—who was only fourth—by 16 lengths; yet in the Leger, Impérieuse won, and Blink Bonny was only a bad fourth. What a difference a quarter of a mile makes, don't it? The Cesarewitch was notorious that year for the dead heat between three—Prioress, 4 yrs., 6 st. 9 lbs.; El Hakim, 3 yrs., 6 st. 9 lb.; Queen Bess, 3 yrs., 4 st. 10 lbs. When the dead heat was run off Mr. Ten Broeck substituted Fordham for a boy named Tankerley, and his mare, Prioress, won by a length and a half. T. Parr won the Cambridgeshire with Odd Trick, also ridden by Fordham. In 1858 Sir J. Hawley won the Derby with Beadsman, and Mr. Merry won the St. Leger with Sunbeam, having declared to win with Blanche of Middlebie, who was only third. In 1859 Sir Joseph won the Derby again with Musjid. In 1860 Lord Ailesbury's St. Albans won the Metropolitan, and that afternoon I approached a very clever old bookie named Sargeant, and asked what price he would lay me against St. Albans for the Chester Cup; he promptly offered me 1000 to 30, which I jumped at, and whilst I was writing the bet down he somewhat contemptuously remarked, "I suppose you know he has a ten pound penalty," and I, equal to the occasion, replied, "Yes, old boy, I do know, and I am not at all sure that I should have backed him with a 4 st. 7 lbs. boy round that course ;

but with a 5 st. 3 lbs. lad it is good," at least so it turned out, and I never hedged a bob of it.

That cunning old bookie used often afterwards to ask me what I fancied would win some big handicap or other, but I never got so pretty a bet out of him again. St. Albans went wrong, and did not start for the Derby, but won the Leger, beating Thormanby (winner of the Derby) a long way.

That year, Goodwood was the scene of an extraordinary performance by Lord Annesley's Sweet Sauce, who won the Stewards' Cup, six furlongs, and also the Goodwood Cup, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and, *mirabile dictu*, started first favourite for the Chesterfield Cup the next day, but was nowhere, and well I recollect George Payne administering some very "strong sauce" to his friend Annesley for being so hard on his good horse, who, if I mistake not, had a dicky fore leg before he won his first race.

1861 was a remarkable year. Lord Stamford ran two horses in the Two Thousand, and backed Imaus to win him a large stake, having tried him much better than Diophantus; but the latter won, and Imaus was nowhere. Kettledrum was second, and afterwards won the Derby from Poor Dundee, one of the greatest certainties that ever started for the race; but he broke down, though he gamely

struggled into second place. The Ascot Cup was won by Thormanby, beating Fairwater, Parmesan, and St. Albans—a quartette hard to beat. The 'cute Ten Breock astonished us Britishers by winning the Goodwood Cup with Stark, an American bred horse; Wizard second, and Thormanby nowhere.

An Irish horse, Croagh Patrick, won both Stewards' and Chesterfield Cups; but six weeks afterwards was objected to by Captain Little and Sir Joseph Hawley, the two Josephs owning the second in each of these races, and, wonderful to relate, the objection was not finally settled till May 17th, 1862, nine months afterwards, when Lords Derby, Exeter, and Zetland thus worded their decision: "We think we are not justified in entering on the merits of the case with a view of disqualifying Croagh Patrick!" Though these were three good sportsmen, yet I think the stewards have come on a bit during the last thirty years.

1862 was a memorable year for me, for, after seeing Caractacus win the Somersetshire Stakes at Bath, I backed him to win me a good stake for the Derby at 40 to 1 (only the week before, mind you!), and as I never had a chance of hedging I had to stand the shot. There were 34 starters, and an unknown jockey (Parsons) rode Caractacus; his winning was a bit of real good luck for me, and how

he beat The Marquis (who afterwards won the Leger) and Buxton "no fellah could understand," as Lord Dundreary would say. However, I determined to invest some of my winnings in a race-horse or two of my own, and I believe my first purchase was Hesper, a chestnut by Hesperus, a very good looking and powerful horse, who, though he made a good bit of noise, had a wonderful turn of speed.

I selected Drewitt of Lewes to train him for me, and here I must say a word or two for that honest, good man. He was a particularly careful and good stableman, but knew nothing about handicapping horses or placing them, nor did he ever bet, and in my humble opinion the above attributes constitute the perfect trainer—at all events to an owner fond of his racehorses, and wishful to keep their merits to himself as well as to ensure getting the best price when he chooses to back them. I don't believe there are any of the Dick Drewitt school of trainers left.

One of his peculiarities was certainly uncommon, for I verily believe he thought as much of his breed of Berkshire pigs, as he did of his horses. One evening when I arrived at Newmarket, and walked to the stables where my horses used to put up, I found Drewitt absent, and on his return I rather

rebuked him for not being at the stables when I arrived; he naïvely remarked he had been to see his old friend Mat Dawson, as they had swopped two Berkshire gilts, and he wanted to know how Mat liked the pig he had brought him.

Drewitt when a lad had either been apprenticed to, or was employed in old Forth's stables, the trainer of Little Wonder, who won the Derby in 1840, and I frequently made him rehearse what he heard when Little Wonder was being saddled. The jockey, Macdonald, of course was present, and these were the orders that Dick told me that Forth gave: "Now you mind and catch tight hold of his head and come truly through with him, for he is an early foal!" Short and to the point, for there is little doubt he was foaled "a year earlier" than his competitors were! Good old Drewitt! when I used to ask him, after a favourable trial, how much he would have on, he used to pull his waistcoat down with both hands, and say: "Drat it! I won't have anything, thank you, Colonel; but if he wins, you will have to give the Missus a new bonnet."

Mrs. D. was a good old soul, all 14 stone; so I much preferred giving her a bonnet instead of a gown, for she took a lot of stuff. However, you bet she didn't want for bonnets!

One great inducement to my training at Lewes was that, George Fordham, who was apprenticed to Drewitt, constantly rode for the stable, and when out of his articles, though I gave him no retainer, he would always ride for me if his first master, Ten Broeck, did not want him. In my opinion Fordham was the very best jockey I have ever known; though not a first-rate horseman, he had wonderful hands, never abused a horse, and was an extraordinary judge of pace, was never flurried, and always knew to a nicety where the winning-post was, and, above all, was a paragon of honesty.

On one occasion I was much struck with his loyalty to Mr. Ten Broeck. I had gone down with Fordham over-night to Brighton, and we had supper together before turning in. At daybreak we started in a cab and got out (as was my custom when I went down to try my horses) at a farmhouse two miles short of Lewes, where two hacks awaited us, and we rode over the hills to the trial-ground. After two or three trials, we rode down to Drewitt's, and played havoc with an excellent breakfast, went round the stables, and travelled up to London together. It was just before the Derby, when Umpire was a great favourite, and I was dying to know what chance Fordham thought the horse had, as he was

going to ride him ; but, though we talked much of the race, Umpire's name was never mentioned, and, in spite of our having spent so many hours together, "The Kid" (as I called him) left me as ignorant of his opinion of his mount, as if he didn't know there was such a horse. How many jockeys are there now, who would not tell a casual acquaintance in ten minutes all he knew about his Derby mount ? and, mind you, there are not many owners who would not ask !

Well, to return to Hesper : I first ran him in the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood ; but that was too far for him. However, he won me a selling-race, half a mile, that week. At Newmarket Second October I made and won my first match, Hesper, 4 yrs., 9 st.; Arrogante, 2 yrs., 6 st. 7 lbs.; last 3 furlongs of A.B.* mile, and the old one won, six lengths. Same meeting he won another selling-race, half mile, five lengths. Houghton Meeting he won a selling-race, half mile, ten lengths ; and yet another selling-race, when Lord Stamford claimed him. It was at this Houghton Meeting that Fordham matched his hack Levity, aged, against Jackson the bookie's (commonly called "Jock of Oran") Neptunus, 3 yrs., last half of R.M.,† for £500, p.p. catch weights, and the little hack won, twenty lengths.

* Abingdon Mile.

† Rowley Mile.

I had been doing a bad trade that week and was riding down to the course in a most disconsolate mood, when I was hailed by a good-natured grass widow, who was driving a smart pair of cobs, and on my pulling up she asked how I had been getting on, and, hearing of my bad luck, she whispered to me that "she knew a *real cert*" (but I was to keep it to myself). "Farfalla will win the Houghton Handicap to-day, and you will get a good price," she said. The mare belonged to my friend Alexander; so before the race, I threw a fly, casually asking him whether she had any chance. He said none: he had seen her beaten in her trial, and his trainer told him she was coughing. I said I had heard a different tale and intended to back the mare; he put me down as a stubborn idiot. Good old Alec! he was straight as an arrow, but his trainer was not.

On riding up to the old betting ring I shoved my cob in between two of the party whom I expected would back Farfalla, if it was right, and on my asking the mare's price they both drew back their hacks and rode round to the other side of the ring; that convinced me my information was correct, and the poor owner was in the cart. I got a good price, and plenty of it, and was delighted to see the mare roll home, and duly thanked my kind

informant ; for I was home on the week and a nice bit to the good. I don't know that one can give a better instance of the luck of racing, for I should never have dreamt of backing the winner, but should have been well on the second, Little Pippin, who was favourite, had it not been for the fair dame taking compassion on my rueful countenance. Two or three other selling-platers passed through my hands that year, but they did me no good ; however, I had a real good year, and won £11,097, £4600 of which was at Epsom and £2550 at Newmarket Houghton.

The next year, 1863, I had ten horses in training, and, though I had not the best of luck with them, yet they were useful. I bought Jack o' Hearts, 3 years, of old John Osborne, early in the year for £500 ; Bally Edmund, 5 years, of Saxon, for £500, and £200 first win ; Rubicon, 5 years, of G. Fitzwilliam, for £300, and £300 first win ; the two latter could stay well, and I hoped to have won the Cesarewitch with Jack o' Hearts, as old Osborne told me he was sure to get the course. So, as he had been beaten three times as a two-year-old, I determined to keep him till autumn ; but I was not clever enough to do so, though, as it turned out, I should not have won the Cesarewitch had my horse been handicapped

at 5 st. 7 lbs., instead of 6 st. 7 lbs., for Mr. Merry's Lioness won anyhow, with 6 st. 8 lbs. on her four-year-old back, and she started favourite, a position which her previous performances would certainly not warrant. However, I am forging ahead a bit too fast.

It happened that in our stable there was a good-looking though rather coarse chestnut three-year-old colt called Blackdown, and as he belonged to a man I didn't care a deal about, I never took much interest in the horse, especially as Fordham told me he had ridden him in a hurdle-race at some small local meeting; but about a fortnight before Goodwood, I was asked to try him with my horses, and then discovered for the first time that, his owner and Drewitt thought a lot of him. So, after having drawn up an agreement in writing, to the effect that, if Blackdown won the trial I was to do the commission and put the whole of the stable-money on, I consented to try him, and having dodged the only real tout there was (I fancy I gave him a sov. to get into one of the shepherds' huts on the downs till after the trial was over), the result of the trial fortunately didn't get out, and Blackdown won so easily that—barring accidents—he looked a good thing for the Goodwood Stakes.

Well, I waited calmly till the race week, and, as

luck would have it, old Mr. Greville ("Gruncher") had tried his horse Anfield, 3 yrs., trained by Alec Taylor at Manton, so that he could not lose the race; at least, so thought Greville and his friend George Payne. There was a lot of betting on this race in those days, and Anfield was quoted at 7 to 4 the day before; so, to prepare the ground nicely for my commission, after dining at the Bedford Hotel at Brighton, I strolled out with a cigar to the Old Ship Hotel, where most of the principal bookies put up, and, it being a fine night, no sooner did I appear on the scene than Jackson, who had done himself a bit extra well, asked if I would back anything. "What on the field?" says I. "70 to 40 to you, Colonel," says he. "I'll take it, my lad." "Right you are." Twice, thrice, and so on up to ten times, when he pulled up. "Twice that," says I. "Done," says he. 1400 to 800 was duly recorded in our volumes, and as there was a nice little ring by this time formed round us on the pavement, the bookies were quite satisfied that the Lewes stable had no chance.

On the morrow, the owner of Blackdown came to me in a fearful state of mind, asking, "Was it true that I had been backing the favourite, and what price did his monkey on Blackdown average?" "Yes," I replied, "I had backed the favourite, and as yet

no other horse." Well, when the numbers went up for the Stakes, I got out my pencil, and after a little haggling jotted down 20 fifties Blackdown, from old J. B. Morris, a sort of bellwether of the ring, upon which all the principal bookies swarmed round me, and I wrote down 20 to 1 to nearly all I wanted on. The only man who would not lay 20 was Henry Steel, and he said "No, I won't lay thee twenties, but thee can have 1000 to 60 three times up to flag fall," and, it being a pretty bet to top up with, I took it; then I rushed off to find George Payne, and implored him to cover the large stake he had on Anfield, and he did; but, old "*Gruncher*" would not chuck a penny away on the Lewes hurdle-racer. It was wicked of me, but I was rather glad he wouldn't, for I never could cotton to that acid old sportsman.

It was a fine race; I had told little Nightingall to make strong running with Jack of Hearts as far as he could, but as he had ridden in the trial I concluded he knew my horse had no chance; but, from leading Blackdown in his work the last fortnight, Jack had come on a lot, and to my dismay he led right into the rails, where his jockey gave him two cuts with the whip, and my visions of the Cesarewitch vanished. Blackdown and Anfield raced head and head from the distance, but our

horse got the best of the struggle and won by a neck. I believe that was the best stake I ever won betting, but I cannot find my betting book of 1863.

I had a real good week, for I won £8500, notwithstanding losing a lot of money over the March Stakes, when I thought I had an extra good thing in Cuckoo, 2 years; but she was easily beaten by Laura, 3 years, by Orlando out of Torment, belonging to Lord Westmoreland, and I was obliged to claim that well-bred mare for something under £400, and oh! the row and bother there was over that claim I shall never forget. Poor Drewitt implored me to let his bosom-friend, W. Goater, have the mare back or he would never be able to grasp his hand again, and, worse than that, he felt sure that W. G. would nevermore swop a pig with him; but I was firm. I had backed my filly for a lot of money, and I was sure that any three-year-old that could give her weight for age must be a clinker in her class.

I had a good fair race over the Goodwood Cup that week too, having backed both Isoline* and Atherstone at 8 to 1 with Steel at Newmarket July. I thought Atherstone was good for it, but Steel would not lay me a fair price unless I backed

* Isoline was purchased from Tom Parr by Richard Naylor of Hooton, in whose colours she ran and won.

another as well, so I took Isoline. Atherstone belonged to my cousin, John N. Astley, and just before the races, the first day, I asked him how the old horse was. "Couldn't be better!" was his answer. On the second day I asked him again, when my cousin said, "Well, I rode him this morning (he weighed about 12 st.) and I thought he didn't like the ground; so I have struck him out." A child could have knocked me down with a feather; however, Isoline was good enough, and I won a nice stake.

CHAPTER V.

Laura Breaks a Blood-vessel—Sell her for £25—A Gold Mine to Gosden, the Miller of Midhurst—George Thomson—"Major " Booth and his Book—Catch 'em Alive's Sensational Cambridgeshire—Sammy Mordan on the Subject—Orphene—Health *v.* Wealth—Miss Landing a Good Stake—Hold the Whip with Bally Edmund—Races and Matches won by Hesper—Wynnstay—The Squire of Hooton and Biondella—I Ride Hesper off the Course at Shrewsbury—Sooner had a Fly—Frail the Courteous—I Lease Actea for her Racing Career—Old Draper of Kettering—Clarke Thornhill of Rushton—Gladiator Wins Derby for the Frenchmen—The Financialist Owns that he is Beat—Purchase Ostregor of C. Bevil at Huntingdon—Beat Frank Westmoreland's Icicle, giving 4 Stone Odd—Actea's Running—She Wins the Cambridgeshire—Afraid to Trust her with much—Dr. Shorthouse makes an Error, but Apologises and All's Well—Death of Actea—A Narrow Escape—The *Lincoln Chronicle*—An Extract therefrom—Saved!—Hermit's Derby—My Folly—Harry Chaplin a *Real* Friend—Wonderful Generous Conduct—Match with Machell and Knight of the Garter—Ostregor Wins—The Chesterfield Cup at Goodwood, Ostregor Wins, Five Lengths—Sold to Austrian Government for £3000—Offer £1000 to be off Bargain—No Go—Ostregor not a Success at the Stud.

I MUST now tell you a little more about Laura, the beautifully bred filly that I claimed in the March Stakes. I felt convinced that I had got a real good animal which would bring me in a nice little pile if

kept, for some of the big selling-races at Newmarket Autumn Meeting, for there was always a lot of betting on them. Poor Drewitt's feelings were already soothed a bit, and he and Goater had taken the friendly glass; so I told my trainer to take Laura home and give her an easy time of it, for I should not want her for two months. But, alas! not long afterwards I got a letter from the "honest one" to say the bonny mare had broken a blood-vessel whilst gently cantering in front of some yearlings.

I got into the train and ran down to Lewes, and, sure enough, she did look bad, with her head hanging between her knees and all appetite gone, and I then made up my mind that she would never be worth a row of pins, either for racing or the stud; and so thought that clever little vet. Mannington, of Brighton, who met me at the stables. However, we decided to give her one more chance, and I ran her at Newmarket; but she couldn't go a bit, and I believe bled again; and when I got down to Lewes afterwards, I told Drewitt he could give her to any of his farmer-friends to run out at grass, feeling convinced that she had lost her constitution as well as her form.

It happened that old Gosden, the miller of Midhurst, was in the stableyard at the time, and he

said, "Don't do that, I'll give you a pony for her." "Done with you," said I, and he got a nugget indeed, for she bred him thirteen or fourteen foals, five consecutively, of which all could race, namely, Proto-Martyr, Fräulein, Lemnos, Rotherhill, and the last and the best of all, Petrarch. Of these, Fräulein was sold for £3500 or £4000 to Stirling Crawford as a brood mare, after having won a lot of races, and Petrarch was sold for £10,000 to Lord Dupplin, and the old gentleman was offered very large sums for the mare, but would never sell her. That was a bit of bad luck for me, wasn't it? I guess you will say it was bad judgment as well; but, you must recollect, I had no place then where I could turn a mare out.

That summer, George (alias "Jig") Thompson rode two winners for me at the Bibury meeting, Rubicon winning the Andover Stakes, 1 mile, and Bally Edmund the Gentlemen's Derby, 2 miles. "Jig's" bodily weight was about 7 st. 4 lbs., and as old Bally carried 12 st. 8 lbs., it was a bit of a struggle for the little man to hug over 5 st. dead weight to the scales when he weighed in. A fine rider was "Jig," and a pleasant one; no nattier gentleman jock ever pulled on a boot. At this meeting, Booth the bookie (commonly called the "Major") came whining to me, "You never bet with me now, Colonel; why

don't you bet with yer Booth?" So when the numbers went up for the Biennial (and there were 17 starters), I said, "Now, 'Major,' what against King George?" "I'll lay you 800 to 100," says he, "Twice," says I. "Done," says he; "he's got no chance," and as he was ridden by F. Adams (elder brother to James) Booth looked to have the best of it; but The King won comfortably, and as the "Major" had only a thousand-pound book on the race, I and my pals had great fun with him, for he was terribly crestfallen at having coaxed me to knock the bottom out of his book.

The Cambridgeshire that year was a sensational race. Catch 'em Alive won, ridden by Sam Adams, and trained by William Day; Merry Hart was second, but when the horses weighed in after the race, Merry Hart somehow was passed all right, but Catch 'em Alive couldn't draw the weight, and the stakes were on the point of being awarded to Merry Hart—and a wonderful popular win it would have been, for he belonged to Frank Westmoreland, that most charming of men, and he would have won a real good haul in bets—but on the third horse, Summerside, being found also short of weight, the scales were examined, and it was discovered that some wretch had fastened some sheet lead to the bottom of the weight-scale, and when

that was removed, Catch 'em's weight was all right, and poor Frank was only second.

When I got down to the stables that evening S. Mordan (who was then apprenticed to Drewitt, and had won the Goodwood Stakes on Blackdown) a very comical lad, was describing to Drewitt what had happened in the weighing-room when Adams could not draw his proper weight, and I think I never laughed more than at his droll description, which ran thus: "They gets a great big whip—lor! you never seed such a whip! As soon as Adams gets hold of it, down flops the scale, and hup goes the beam; then when the whip was took away from him, hup goes the scale again. Then Mr. Day goes and stands close to the scale, and leans his umbrella on it, and as he was a-pushing he says, 'There, Mr. Manning, he's all right; look at the beam *now*, Mr. Manning,' and lor! he was a-pushing, *surely*; and when he was told to stand away, hup goes Sammy again, and down comes the beam. There, I never see such a job in my life, and they turned me out of the weighing-room coz I was a-laughing so and couldn't stop."

Well, I finished up the Houghton week with what ought to have been a real good big win; but, bad luck to it! the rain came down in such torrents that many of the bookies could not stand it, and left

the ring and sought shelter in their flies. I had a sharp touch of lumbago, and could not ride that day, so had given my commission of £2000 to two friends to do for me. Good old Henry Savile got me only £1500 to £1000, and t'other party only returned a level monkey ; so I only won £2000. If it had been fine I should certainly have won £5000, and perhaps £10,000.

I had bought a two-year-old of old John Osborne, Orphene by Orpheus, and finding it could go a hopper, I borrowed Lord Burleigh, a very speedy four-year-old belonging to "Cherry Angel," and sent them half a mile up the Bury Hill the day before this race. The young one won so cleverly that nothing but tumbling down could prevent its winning, and easy too. There were 16 runners in the selling-race ; Sam Mordan rode, and Orphene ran up to her trial and won anyhow. She was claimed, and curiously enough she never won another race for her new owner, though she started lots of times. It was a case of just catching a filly at her very best. She had not cost me much at all events in keep : I bought her on Monday for £300, won £2000 on the Friday, and she was claimed for £100 the same day—not a bad instance of the nimble ninepence.

I challenged for the Whip at this meeting, and

named Bally Edmund, and as no one accepted, I became the holder of that ancient trophy. In 1864 I had a bad year, my best meeting being Shrewsbury November, where old Hesper, 6 yrs., was the hero of the hour. It will be remembered that Lord Stamford had claimed him of me at Newmarket in 1862; he only ran him three times in 1863, and he won each time. During that winter he became the property of Mr. Kellie, who ran him several times, and in November the old horse was sent to Shrewsbury in charge of Ashmall the jockey, who was to sell him if he could for £300. On the 15th, Hesper ran unplaced for the half-mile handicap, when Mr. Naylor's Biondella was second.

I was staying that week at Wynnstay with good old Watty Wynn, as also was Naylor; and on our way home by train after the races, we were talking over the day's running, and Naylor fancied he was unlucky not to win with Biondella, I said I thought Hesper ought to have won that race, which idea Naylor ridiculed. So I said I would make a match with Biondella if I could get Hesper for £300, and on arriving at Wynnstay we wrote out and signed the match, and sent it to Frail. Next day I paid Ashmall £300 for Hesper, and ran him in a handicap; Fordham rode him, distance $3\frac{1}{4}$ furlongs. The old gee won comfortably, and I landed some £1500 in bets.

After the race the Squire of Hooton's face was a study, as he had evidently made up his mind the old horse was no use; however, on the following day our match came off, and Naylor confided to me he should save his stake by backing my horse. I told him he would have to be pretty nippy, for I meant laying all the odds I could, as it was a guinea to a gooseberry. The distance was only 3 furlongs, and Hesper won by four lengths.

Next day the old horse won a selling-race, winner to be sold for £300, and as I had done so well with him I meant to let him go, for he made more noise than ever; so I walked away when the auctioneer took his place, to avoid the temptation of buying him in. On my return I met friend Frail, the courteous clerk of the course, and asked who had bought the old horse? Taking off his hat, as only he and the late Duke of Beaufort could do it, he told me that he had bought him in for me at £560. I disclaimed the arrangement altogether, when he said, with a Louis Quatorze, bow, "It will cost Colonel Astley nothing, but I could not allow so good a supporter of my meetings to lose his horse;" and so the fund (which meant Frail) lost £130 by the transaction.

On the morrow, I ran Hesper again in a race, three-quarters of a mile; but he was beaten, as he

never could get even that distance. I ran him the same afternoon in a half-mile handicap, and he won by three lengths, carrying 9 st. 10 lbs.; so the speedy old gee won me three races and a match, which meant a nice pile at the settling day. I was so pleased that I had a leg-up, and rode him off the course amidst great cheering. Ere I got to the stable I much rued my temerity, and wished I was inside a fly: for, just as we approached the bridge over the Severn, there came up a side street, a gilded car drawn by six spotted horses, with a circus band in full blast therein, which quite upset the grand old horse's equanimity, and by the way he caracoled and snatched the snaffle-bridle through my hands, I fully expected that every moment the round of beef would leave the plate, for I never did enjoy riding in a five, or even a seven pound saddle. Luckily, the stables at the Barge Inn were over the bridge, and you may bet I wasn't sorry to take refuge in them.

Poor old Hesper! he won me three races the following year, half a mile at Nottingham; half a mile Epsom Spring, carrying 10 st. 10 lbs., beating Hodgman's The Gem, 3 yrs., 6 st. 8 lbs. (who was favourite), three lengths or more; and finished up by winning a three-furlong handicap at Shrewsbury, his favourite battlefield, after which I sold him to a breeder in

Yorkshire. The only other horse that did me any good this year was Dr. Syntax, whom I bought of old Billy Ashworth the bookie, who was hard up, for £200. I won a monkey with him, and sold him for a monkey. 1865 was the worst year I ever had. I think I must have gone a bit wrong in my head, for not only did I lose heavily, betting, but, like an idiot, I bought of James Smith (the owner of Rosebery in later years) Swordsman, 3 yrs., by Voltigeur out of Dividend, and his half-brother Gladiator, 2 yrs., by Stockwell, and by some extraordinary means paid him £3500 for the two. Swordsman was no good, and never won a race for me. But I was wonderful unlucky with Gladiator; for, not only was he one of the best-looking two-year-olds I ever saw, but he could go, too.

He won me a little race at Huntingdon, and then I ran him in the Champagne at Doncaster. Just below the distance he broke a blood-vessel so badly that he staggered and fell, and just as I was sending for a gun to have him shot, he got up and walked to his stable, and the greedy toad ate up a great big mash that evening just as if nothing had happened to him. He ran twice in 1866 and several times in 1867, but only won one race, the Claret at Brighton, and I sold him at a fair price to the foreigners.

That Spring I bought a good-looking brown horse of Major Beresford—a real good Irishman, who had a horse or two at Drewitt's—Lord Douglas, 4 yrs., by Claret out of Chevy Chase. I tried him satisfactorily and he won me a handicap, three-quarters of a mile, the opening day of Newmarket First Spring Meeting, and I didn't forget to back him. I entered him again, and the old Admiral put him up so in the weights (more than a stone) that I thought he had but little chance. Deacon, a lad in our stable, rode him, and I told him not to knock him about, for he was very fond of using his whip, and to pull him up when he was beat. At the same time I took the precaution to take 1000 to 60 about him twice, for fear of accidents, as I never used to let the "boys" knock my horses out. From my fly at the T.Y.C. I saw Deacon riding hard below the distance, and both he and I gave up all idea of his winning, when, presto! no sooner did he begin to pull his horse up and put down his whip, than Lord Douglas took hold of his bit and won cleverly. Wasn't it wonderful? as the conjurers say.

Fordham won the Claret Stakes on him at Brighton (an appropriate win for a son of Claret), and I had to give three dozen of that wine to the Brighton Club. At Doncaster, Fordham rode him again. I fancied him just above a bit, and he ought

to have won anyhow; but that infernal bend in the course robbed me of my rights. Fordham was waiting, and as the horses swung round the curve they opened out sufficiently—as he thought—to give him a chance of getting up inside; but they closed in, and on trying for another opening, got shut out again; he then went round outside and just got beat. I was much annoyed, but the poor “Kid” was wild with himself, and, in floods of tears, blamed his stupidity for not going outside at first, instead of having to pull up his horse twice. I always maintain that a *bend* is worse than a *turn*, I would sooner back a horse for my bottom dollar round Tattenham Corner than the Doncaster or Kempton bends.

In November, 1865, I went to shoot with my old pal Clarke Thornhill at Rushton, near Kettering, and Draper, the then landlord of the Royal Hotel, made me pull up and look at a yearling filly he had bred, and wanted me to lease her of him (for no man had money enough to buy her, he said); so out I got and went to his stables, and in a loose box, lit up by two or three tallow dips, was a very rough-coated, rather coarse-looking bay filly, with a regular Stockwell head, fair shoulders, extraordinary propelling powers, and plenty of bone, and over a glass or two of brandy and water the bargain was

struck. I was to take the filly (she was by Stockwell-out of Electra by Touchstone) for her racing career, I to pay all expenses and give him half any stakes she might win. Well! we christened her Actea. She took some time coming to hand, but after running five times, she won a little Nursery at Newmarket Second October.

I shall never forget the first time I tried her at Lewes with Hesper and another. Actea ran very green and had but a small boy on her back: the whip or something frightened her, and she bolted and disappeared down a frightful steep hill-side. I galloped my hack to the top of the precipice down which she had gone, and, looking below, fully expected to see her and the boy lying in a confused heap at the bottom. Not a bit of it; they had negotiated the descent all right, and presently rejoined us none the worse.

This year's Derby was a memorable one, as a French horse won it for the first time, and a real good horse he was (some people thought he was a "too early" foal), the mighty Gladiateur. Blair Athol had won the year before, and whereas he was afterwards nearly as good a sire as his progenitor (Stockwell), Gladiateur, on the other hand, produced nothing of any account. Talking of account, I find a note at the bottom of my ledger, in

which I carefully kept all particulars of my betting transactions, to the following effect: "Made out, October 28th, 1865, after the final smeller at the Houghton Meeting by J. D. A. himself, the financialist is, at last, beat." And, doubtless, I thought so; but, having been a soldier, I was not to be so easily knocked out.

Consequently, I find in 1866 I had some more racehorses, the best of which was Ostregor, 4 yrs., by Stockwell out of Woodcraft's dam, whom I bought of old C. Bevil at Huntingdon Races for £2000, a monkey down and the rest paper. No sooner was the deal concluded, than I ran him in a small race there, and Billy Bevil rode him. I naturally tried to get back part of the purchase-money there and then by laying odds on him without compunction; but he got beat by Vespasian, 3 yrs., and that made Ostregor rather expensive. However, I took him to Goodwood, where he won me a little handicap, carrying 10 stone, beating Icicle, 2 yrs., 5 st. 7 lbs. Frank Westmoreland didn't believe it possible that any four-year-old could give his two-year-old 4 st. 7 lbs. This grand performance made me extra sweet on his chance for the Chesterfield Cup that same week; but he was only second to Broomielaw, to whom he was giving 11 lbs.

Never did any horse show such temper at the post as Broomielaw did that day, and had it not been for the masterly way in which that fine horseman, Custance, stuck to his horse, he would never have started, much less won—hard luck for me, but real jam for Harry Chaplin. Ostregor won me two races afterwards, one at Brighton and another at Newmarket Houghton, and this brings me to Actea, 3 yrs., again. She had won a race at Stockbridge, and the Leger at Stamford, showing fair form, and then I ran her in all four of the principal Newmarket Autumn Handicaps. She was third in Eastern Counties, second in October Handicap, and fourth in Cesarewitch. By this time I was run nearly dry, and had but little heart or coin to back her with for the Cambridgeshire; however, she won, and I netted only some £5000. She was ridden by Huxtable (father of the present promising light weight), carrying 6 st. 6 lbs., beating poor Frank again, whose mare Thalia, 3 yrs., 5 st. 9 lbs., started favourite, and was backed by him to win a very large stake.

I was very angry with old Dr. Shorthouse, who then owned and edited the *Sporting Times*, who described Actea's winning "as a well-planned *coup*." There was a lot of planning about it surely, as no animal could have been run more honestly,

seeing that she had been placed in the three previous races she had run in; however, that funny old boy apologised to me at Tattersall's, and I was real pleased with the win, for lots of my pals had backed Actea, and I had three presents of bits of jewellery sent me after the race. The mare never won for me again, though I ran her eight times in the following year, and I then returned her to old Draper, who again leased her for two years to Stevens, for whom she won eight little races in 1868, and three in 1869; she was ridden in all her races by that eccentric jockey, Speedy Payne, and was again returned to her owner.

Poor old boy! he ought to have put her to the stud, but he confided to me he felt certain he could win the Cambridgeshire again with her, and I fancy trained her at home, never running her till the Cambridgeshire, when she fell, and breaking her thigh was destroyed on the course.

During the ten years between my marriage in 1858, and my father-in-law's death in 1868, I had run my horses in the name of S. Thellusson (a friend of mine who had some horses in Drewitt's stable), and this I did to avoid Mr. Corbett's knowing I was wicked enough to own racehorses. Now it so happened that after Actea had won the Cambridgeshire, I decided to run her in the Liverpool

Cup, and as we were staying that week in Lincoln for the county ball, I started by an early train for Liverpool, and my wife was to return home to Elsham by road that same afternoon. As I was getting into the train I bought a *Lincolnshire Chronicle* at the station, that weekly paper having been published that morning, and before I arrived at Retford, my eye fell on this horrible paragraph: "Col. Astley, who runs his horses in the name of Mr. S. Thellusson, much to the delight of his many friends, won the Cambridgeshire last week with Actea." Well, that was a scorcher! and I felt sure that if Corbett read it, he would take particular care I should never inherit a copper from him. So I cut out and sent the obnoxious paragraph by the guard of a train, giving him a douceur of five shillings to see that the note I sent my wife was delivered to her at Brigg on her way home that evening, and in it, I impressed upon her the paramount importance of her cutting out the mischievous sentence the moment she got home, on the chance of the old squire not having read it.

My note was duly delivered, and on arrival she found her father busily engaged reading the *Chronicle*. With great presence of mind she waited till he left the room, and then cut out the paragraph, and when I arrived the next day (after

Actea had been beaten) all seemed serene with the old boy, and I verily believe he never knew of my delinquency, or his will would not have been so kindly worded in my favour. It was a squeak though, wasn't it?

Now we come to 1867, a queer year for me, very. During the previous autumn I had made up my august mind that Hermit by Newminster, the property of Harry Chaplin, could not stay a little bit; so concluded I would secure a useful sum to back the winner of the Derby with, by laying 20 to 1 against Hermit to lose £8000. The squire of Blankney had, on the contrary, a strong opinion that his horse would win the Blue Ribbon for him. We often met out hunting, and I fancy I stayed at Blankney that spring for Lincoln races, and whenever we did meet he always tried to persuade me to stand to win on his horse, but all to no purpose, and presently the Two Thousand Guineas was run, Knight of the Garter being a good second to Vauban; and as it was an open secret that Hermit was a long way in front of the Knight, I that evening tried to back Hermit back, and his owner hearing me offering to take twelve monkeys of Steel, he in the most friendly manner, after calling me an elderly fool, for not being on, instead of against, his horse, said: "I will lay you 12 to 1 to cover your

money, the night before the Derby: for I stand to win a big stake, and I want my friends to win, too."

I was overcome with gratitude at so noble an offer, and waited with composure the progress of events. Well, as everybody knows, Hermit, about ten days before the Derby, broke a blood-vessel when at exercise, and out he went to 100 to 1. The night before the Derby, at the Old Turf Club in Arlington Street, I saw the squire and condoled with him on his apparent bad luck; it struck me that he thought his horse had no chance, for he had not done a canter for ten days, and Harry had given up his jockey, Custance, deciding to let his horse take his chance with a lad named Daly on him. I took back that evening 2000 to 20 (I think it was of Ouseley Higgins). As soon as I got down to Epsom the next day I went to the paddock, and there saw Hermit walking about (quite an hour before the race) with his coat staring, and a dejected, languid look about him, as if he was more likely to die on the course than to win the great race; it was bitterly cold, and snow fell at intervals. I was well on Vauban, the winner of the Guineas, and never thought it was worth while to take back the remaining £6000 I stood against Hermit (fool that I was!) for I could have had 100 to 1 to as much as I liked, and in all my born days I never have been so

astonished—thunderstruck, I believe, is the proper term—as when I saw Hermit overhaul Marksman and Vauban, and win that Derby by a neck.

After his horse weighed, in I met the “Squire,” and, though he had won close on £100,000, I could see his good fortune was marred by the knowledge that I had lost, and he then and there said, “Put your losings into your account on Monday to my name, and I will pay them.” Never did, or could a man behave more nobly than he, and it was done so nicely, no swagger or conditions, and I can tell you it lifted a huge lump off my burden. It took a bit of doing, but of course I paid him back his money in due course. Hermit’s was a marvellous performance, but he was, like most of the Newminsters, a horse that required but little work. My part of the business shows how true that trite, but often neglected, saying is: “No bet is good till it is well hedged;” and in this instance I could so easily have stood on velvet.

To return to Ostregor: I had made a match that spring with Captain Machell, that Ostregor, 5 yrs., should run Knight of the Garter, 3 yrs., at weight for age, the Rowley mile, the Friday after the Two Thousand Guineas—that meant two stone difference in weight. Fordham rode mine, 9 st., and Covey, Knight of the Garter, 7 st. After the latter’s

running in the Two Thousand, the talent laid 2 to 1 on the young one, and I was fairly frightened to bet ; but the old one won, half a length, and that rather influenced me in underrating Hermit. Ostregor was a grand mover, and when the ground suited him took a tremendous stride ; but a curious instance of how the going affects some horses was demonstrated in the Trial Stakes at Epsom, where Ostregor and Moulsey (Lord Bateman's) met.

The Epsom course had been very hard, but sufficient rain had fallen to soften the surface, though the ground was very greasy and slippery. Ostregor came bounding along, but (as Fordham told me afterwards) at Tattenham Corner he slipped and dare not afterwards stride out again. Moulsey, being a short striding, scratchy goer, was not affected in the same way, and, to my chagrin and heavy loss, Moulsey won. At Newmarket it would have been poundage on my horse.

Well, we must now flit to Goodwood. As I told you, Ostregor was second to Broomielaw in the Chesterfield Cup the year before, and he was handicapped in this same race this year at 9 st. As bad luck would have it, I had run two or three horses, and they had performed so indifferently I was afraid that our stable was out of form, and Satan in the guise of two old Austrian General

Officers approached me on the Wednesday and bid me £3000 for my pet Ostregor. Now, I owed old Padwick that very sum, which he had convinced me must positively be paid him on the following Monday; so I very reluctantly accepted their offer, and agreed to deliver the old horse on the Friday afternoon, after I had run him in the Chesterfield Cup, win or lose. Custance rode him, and I backed him to win me some £5000, and the gallant old horse won, five lengths.

Deary me! how I hated myself, old Padwick, and the Austrian Generals! I got the two old boys together and offered them £1000 to be off the bargain, but no bite. I then asked Tattersall to go and offer them £2000 to let me keep my dear old horse, but they replied no money would tempt them, they had bought him for the Emperor of Austria and they must deliver him to their master. I daresay many of my readers will despise me, when I own that I never felt so utterly cast down and cut up, and I recollect well, chucking Custance a pony ready (for winning), then taking to my heels, and running down the hill, hardly stopping till I reached the little house we had taken for the week near Chichester. After packing up my traps I went off to Brighton. Good old horse! I had inscribed on that Cup (and, though stony broke, it reposes still

on my sideboard): "The best looking, best tempered, and gamest horse of his day. We ne'er shall see his like again." However, he could not have had a pleasanter home, and one of the Baltazzis sent me a good picture of him whilst he was at the stud. Curiously enough he was not a success, and very few of his stock were winners. I paid old "Paddy" on the Monday, but to me it was the price of blood.

CHAPTER VI.

Pirate Chief—Curious Accident—Bad Luck at Lewes—Dead Heat for the Cambridgeshire—Buckworth Powell's Legacy—Nicely Invested—Don Pedro—Lictor and Limner—Frail in the Know—Follow Suit—Lictor Wins me a Nice Stake in Eton Handicap—Sell him to Sir Joseph Hawley, who Wins Liverpool Autumn Cup with him—Mr. Corbett taken Ill—His Death—A Courteous, High-Minded Gentleman—His Will—My Son to take the Name of Corbett—Estate Management—My Hands Full—Depression of Land since 1870—Lease six Two-Year-Olds of Skipworth—My First Meeting with Fred Webb—His First Win—Maria Marchioness of Ailesbury and Croxton Park Races—Chester Cup—Too Clever by Half—But Knight of the Garter Wins—Charlie Legard's Vespasian—Am Elected a Member of the Jockey Club—No Time for Racing—Sell my Horses at Tattersall's, December 6th—Rent a Cottage at Newmarket in 1870—Jolly Times—Saxon's Death—Adonis Wins Cambridgeshire—Lord Falmouth—Kingcraft's Derby—Gaston Wins Feather Plate—Sell him to Charley Kerr—Start Breeding Yearlings at Elsham—Buy Broomielaw—Anecdotes of the Horse—John N. Astley's Pell-Mell—Buy Scamp—Stock a Farm on Credit—My Brother Hugh's Letter—The Browns.

I HAD a nice three-year-old, Pirate Chief, by Bucca-
neer out of Emotion by Alarm ; but in April, just as
he was getting fit, he met with a singular accident. I
was at Lewes, and had been out on the downs seeing
the horses do their work, and when we rode back,

the lad that looked after Pirate Chief put him on a single rack chain and left him in his box, in order to fetch something. The silly toad had carelessly forgotten to pull the stirrup-irons up, and they were left dangling at his side. The horse must have turned his head to bite at a fly or something that annoyed him, and got the side of the near stirrup-iron wedged between his teeth. Directly he found his head fast he started struggling to get free, broke his rack chain, and just as we—hearing a noise—entered his box, he reared up, fell over and ricked his back. Though every remedy was applied (fresh flayed sheepskins placed over his loins were the ultimate partial cure), yet, he never really recovered.

Four months after the accident I ran him in the Lewes Handicap, and I took 1000 to 60 three times about him, more because I didn't like to hear the bookies trying to knock him out, than because I thought he had any chance. Well! the horses started, and all went the wrong side of two posts, three came on and finished the race, four turned back and went round one of the posts they had missed, but Pirate Chief and two others went back and went round the two posts *all* had missed, and of these latter three horses, Pirate Chief came in first; but, as bad luck would have it, Judge Clark had left the box, thinking there were no more horses to

come, and, though he was close to the box, the Stewards decided the race was to be run over again, and the first favourite, Brayley's Pearl Diver, won. It was very hard luck for me, for undoubtedly Pirate Chief and his two companions were the only horses that had run the right course at the first start, and if only the judge had been in the box when they passed, I should have won £3000, instead of losing £180.

The Chief only won me a selling-race afterwards, and was claimed by Felix Fryer for £300. In October this year I went to Bedford races. The course was about two miles from the station, and there were no flies left, so I and two friends started to walk. We had not gone far, before a good looking but wretchedly bad two-year-old of mine, called Mexico, came trotting by to run in a selling-race. I hailed the boy, and, lengthening the stirrups, mounted and trotted away quite gaily, when presently poor Harry Hastings, Peter Wilkinson, and two others, came by in a fly and saw me; they set to holloaing, putting up umbrellas, and trying all they knew to startle my blood hack, and, though good fun enough for them, it was only middling for me, for there was a nasty open ditch running alongside the road. However, I stuck to my quad and rode into the paddock; but even my exquisite horsemanship

on the turnpike, didn't make the duffer win his race on the turf.

The Cambridgeshire this year was memorable for the dead heat between "Uncle Clayton's" Lozenge and Joey Hawley's Wolsey, and in the decider Lozenge won by a neck; but, though all my pals won, I was not on. Dear old Tom Drake was very proud of his uncle, and all the family had a nice bite. Buckworth Powell, late of the Grenadiers, did a good stroke of business over this race. An old relative had left him £100. Bucky was much disappointed at the amount, but decided to let the legacy have a run, and, fortunately, selected Lozenge (before the weights came out, I believe), and, placing the hundred in driblets all round the lists pretty well simultaneously, he got £10,000 to £100 and won it—what a bit of luck! wonderful, wasn't it?

A neighbour of ours in Lincolnshire, Capt. Skipworth (alias Don Pedro) had a breeding-stud, and he the previous autumn, being rather taken with the good luck Actea had brought (through me) to her owner, offered to lease two of his yearlings to me, and I sent the two colts, Lictor and Limner, both by Lambton by the Cure, to Drewitt's, and Lictor turned out a fairish two-year-old, winning me a plate at Newmarket, the Grand Stand Plate at the Ascot Spring Meeting, and the Sussex Stakes at

Newmarket Houghton. I ought to have won a cracker on him the first time I ran him in a selling-race at Epsom Spring, but he was an awkward horse for a boy to ride, as he pulled hard ; so I was obliged to put a double bridle on him, and, though he got off every false start, he was left lengths when the flag fell. He made up a tremendous lot of ground but could only get second, and I was very fortunate in getting Westmoreland to claim him for me, on condition I claimed his horse for him.

In the following year, 1868, I backed Lictor for a lot to win the Wokingham Stakes at Ascot ; but he ran badly, and as he was on the spot I decided to run him at Windsor the following week, and when I arrived on the course, I was much surprised by my old friend Frail (who was clerk of the course at Windsor) coming to me and asking me to be allowed to stand the odds to ten pounds with me on Lictor for the Eton Handicap, a mile. Of course I told him he could do so ; but, showing him a whole page in my betting-book that I had devoted to Lictor's chance in the Wokingham, I declared he could have but little chance of winning. But, with hat in hand, the old boy assured me the race was good for Lictor, and I (with a certain amount of sense) concluded the intelligent one knew more than I did,

and must be aware that two or three of the most dangerous starters were not on the job ; so I took 2000 to 200, and with much pleasure handed the “talented one” 100 sovereigns as his share of the spoil when Lictor had won cleverly. The horse did me but little good afterwards, and I sold him to Hawley for £500, and he won the Liverpool Autumn Cup for him.

It was during the Goodwood Meeting this year that a summons arrived for the wife and me to return at once to Elsham ; for her father had been taken very seriously ill ; on arriving home we found the poor old squire in a very prostrate condition, and he shortly after passed away without any suffering. A more courteous, high-minded gentleman never lived, and though he and I had few notions in common, and many quite antagonistic, yet during the ten years I had been living so much with him, we never had even a little tiff, and I take it his latter days were some of the happiest of his life ; for he doted on his grandchildren.

He left a very just and generous will ; the only fault I could possibly find with it was, that my son on succeeding to his estates, should take the name of Corbett, a good old name enough, but still I had always fondly imagined that my boy would be called Astley. However, the old

Corbett motto of *Deus pascit corvos* would hardly have applied in that case, and so I have got reconciled to the decree. As Mr. Corbett had willed that my son should not succeed to the property till twenty-one years after his death, it was decided to place the estates in Chancery, and I was appointed receiver under the Court. I had a busy time of it : for, like many a good old country gentleman that lives on his estate, my father-in-law had somewhat neglected the buildings on his property. The two churches, most of the farmsteads, and the greater part of the cottages, had to be put into tenantable repair, and the building of two new school-houses and twenty-five pair of cottages was my first duty ; while the laying out of a large sum of money in bricks and mortar gave me plenty to superintend ; not to mention the re-valuing of all the farms, and fresh agreements with all the tenants.

I entered thoroughly into my new duties, which interested me much, and I was several times complimented by the Master of the Rolls, or rather the chief clerk, on my work, and I look back on my twenty-one years' receivership with considerable satisfaction, somewhat marred by the conviction that here and there I bought bits of land, which either cut into our property or were contiguous to it, at too high a price ; but it must be remembered

that no white man could have imagined that land would have depreciated to the ruinous extent it has. Touching that topic: in the sixties the choice security that money-lenders or mortgagees selected to trust their money on was land; as the knowing ones used to say, "that can't run away." Now the same parties will agree to lend their money on any safe security, always *excepting* land.

This autumn I leased six two-year-olds of Captain Skipworth, all by Wamba, who was by Touchstone; but they didn't do me any good. I called them Wanderer, Workman, Witless, Woful, Watteau, and Wrestler. One day in 1869, at Winchester races I went to the large tent which then served for a shelter for the jockeys, and asked whether there was a lad who could ride 6 st., and a small voice answered, "I can, Sir," and out came a proper looking little kid, and he told me his name was Fred Webb. I put him up on Wanderer, and told him to come along and never look behind him, and he won handsomely. I think that was the first race that now fine horseman ever won. Workman also won that day, but I returned, or sold, all six colts before the year was out.

I had gone to stay that Spring with Lord Wilton at Melton for Croxton Park races, and there was a house full of "sports" of both sexes. I ran a three-

year-old called Provider by Caterer, which I had bought of Drewitt. I knew little or nothing about him, but Fordham rode him very judiciously on that very peculiar course, and won the Belvoir Stakes, one mile, advising me to run him again that afternoon in the Granby Handicap, a mile and a half, and he won quite easily. When we got home to tea, one or two of the ladies gave it to me very hot (not the tea) for not telling them at breakfast of my good thing; but nothing would have pleased me better than to have been the means of putting them on a winner, especially poor dear Maria of Ailesbury, who had always been so kind to me when quite a lad; but I didn't know enough to tell them.

At Chester, this same year, I tried to do the legitimate and safe trick of standing a bit to nil. I found out on the Tuesday that Knight of the Garter would surely run for the Chester Cup the next day, and would be ridden by Fordham; so, after luncheon, I judiciously employed a few minutes in taking 8000 to 1000 about The Knight, and felt proud of the feat, feeling certain that I should be able to stand at least two or three thousand to nothing, by hedging when the numbers went up. But, would you believe it? the imbecile army of backers didn't fancy The Knight's chance, seeing that after

he won (which he did easily) he was returned in the papers as starting at 7 to 1, therefore I had no chance of laying off my money at a profit, and had it not been for Harry Chaplin arriving just before the race, I should have had to stand the whole shot. However, as I could not afford to lose four figures I laid him 1800 to 200, and then was obliged to win over £5000 on the race.

I bought a nice two-year-old chestnut filly, Tit-Bit, by Weatherbit, at Brighton that summer out of a selling-race, and won a race with her next day, and another at Newmarket Second October. She generally swerved a bit even when winning easily, and in the Houghton Meeting I determined to have a "dash" on her, being very particular in cautioning Fordham to mind and not interfere with the other horses. He was romping home in a little T.Y.C. Handicap race, when she suddenly swerved right across from the off, to the near side of the course, but she was so far ahead of the others that the objection made by the owner of the second was generally considered childish; however, you never know, and the Stewards disqualified Tit-Bit, and thus a hollow win was turned into a solid lose, and she was claimed.

One of the best feats of weight-carrying by any horse I ever witnessed, was achieved this year at

Goodwood, when good old Charley Legard's Vespasian, 6 yrs., won the Chesterfield Cup, ridden by Custance, in a canter, carrying 10 st. 4 lbs. During this year I was elected a member of the Jockey Club, and felt very pleased when Admiral Rous told me of my good fortune; but I had so much to do at Elsham that I found I had not time to look after my horses, in addition to which I had a most fearful bad time of it this Autumn. I had lost at every meeting between Newmarket July and Newmarket Houghton, and I accordingly sold them all at Tattersall's on the 6th of December. They were not a gaudy lot, and only fetched £3500. To top up with, on the Cambridgeshire day I had ridden my beautiful grey hack, half Russian, half Arab, the most gentle and perfect mannered animal I ever bestrode, and after a very bad day, my groom Fred came in to tell me that Ruskie (as I called him) would not feed and was shivering. I went out to the stable, and sent him off for a drink for the poor gee; but we had hardly begun dinner before Fred came running in to say Ruskie had dropped down dead, and, sure enough, there he lay.

It almost looked as if the sensible nag knew what a bad time I had been having, and died of a broken heart in consequence. I buried him in the paddock behind our cottage, and placed a stone in

the wall near his grave (and it's there now) with this inscription :

Beneath this yer sod lies my poor old quad,
He was very fond of me and I of he you see.*

J. D. A.

But my friend, Bob Honeywood, wrote a much better epitaph for him :

Thou'rt gone, my loved steed ; my own gallant grey,
Can I ever forget that Cambridgeshire day ?
Thou hast gone, and thy loss I shall ever deplore,
Thy Mate may be seen, but thy Match never more."

The cottage I mentioned, was a small one I had rented at Newmarket. It had been built by Robinson the jockey, and had a grass paddock behind it of about an acre, and we kept our hacks at Mrs. Flatman's (the widow of old Nat), next door. In the spring of 1870 I bought this cottage and paddock for £3000, and I don't think I ever enjoyed any period of my life so much as those pleasant meetings at Newmarket ; for we did the thing "proper." We each (wife and I) had two hacks, and never missed a morning, when it was fine, but were out on the Limekilns, or wherever the horses were doing their work, by 8.30, and came into a delicious breakfast, with plenty of appetite, at 10.30. An hour or so before the races we mounted our fresh hacks, and with a fly to carry

* Surely Sir John ought to have had the refusal of the Poet Laureateship !—EDITOR.

our coats, cloaks, and convey our two grooms, we caracoled down to the races, seldom dismounting, but riding from saddling paddock to betting ring, and backwards and forwards between different courses. If it rained real hard, we hopped off into our fly. Ah! those were happy days, and no error; and it was a bitter blow when, in after years, the nicest little crib at Newmarket had to be sold, and Jockey Wood bought it, and built those splendid stables in the paddock now the property of Colonel North.

I must now hark back to the Cambridgeshire of 1870. Count Renard had brought over a beautiful three-year-old called Adonis. How it was I never knew, but old Joe Saxon seemed to have the management of the horse, and as I knew him pretty well I used to talk much to him about Adonis, and I believe the old toad persuaded me to back him for the Cesarewitch; but I got no run for my money. However, I determined to be on for the Cambridgeshire, and took 40 to 1 about him. There were some ugly rumours flying about that the horse would not start, or that, if he did go to the post, he would not hurry. No doubt old Saxon and his friends stood against the animal, for certain of the pencillers were always willing to lay a point over the odds against him, no matter

how confident Count Renard was that his horse could, and would, win.

Now, it so happened that the Sunday before the Cambridgeshire, Joe Saxon arrived by train in the afternoon, and, as was his wont, he put up at a public kept by one White, who had been our mess-man in the Tower of London, and he told me the next day that Saxon, when he came off the train, sat down in the bar and asked for a cup of tea, but as he was raising the cup to his lips he suddenly fell forward out of his chair, dead. The mysterious connection between Saxon and Adonis was at once apparent, for the man was no sooner *cold* than the horse came real *hot*, and he won in a common canter, starting first favourite at 6 to 1, in a big field, and, though it suited me right well, there was more than one prominent bookie who had a nasty knock over that race. Lord Falmouth won his first Derby this year with Kingcraft, but he was real lucky to land it, for Macgregor, who had won the Two Thousand, and on whom odds of 9 to 4 were laid, broke down in the race.

From 1870 to 1873 I kept no racehorses, except, I believe, Gaston, 4 yrs., by Light, whom I bought of T. V. Morgan for £200 at Newmarket, and I ran him in the Feather Plate, last 3 miles, B.C.*

* Beacon Course, Newmarket.

As this annual race had been won by two-year-olds for some years, I only took ten ponies about Gaston, and was quite agreeably surprised to see him win, entirely owing to jockeyship, for the little boys who rode the two-year-olds were so tired that they were helpless; but Custance, who rode mine, fairly lifted him past the post. I sold Gaston for £500 to Charley Kerr, who bought him for a friend for steeplechasing.

I now busied myself in building some hovels, and parting the grass fields near Elsham Hall into paddocks; and bought a few brood mares. The first two I purchased were Vexation and Vigorous, both by Vedette, and I only gave about £250 for the two at Tattersall's; both were in foal, and Vexation colt, by Knowsley, turned out a real good miler. I sold him as a yearling to Dudley Carleton, who won eight races with him in 1873. During the winter of 1869, I had bought Broomielaw by Stockwell out of Queen Mary, of H. Chaplin, at "Tatt.'s" for £1600. He was a beautiful dark brown horse, perfectly sound, and the finest mover I think I ever saw; but he had what some people would call a vile temper, but I verily believe his temper was spoilt by bad treatment. He was one of those high-couraged horses that resent rough usage; unlike the timid, cow-tempered brutes who seem satisfied that

man has a right to knock them about and bully them.

When I bought Broomielaw, I bought Phillips, the man that looked after him, as well ; but he was no catch, as he could not resist drink, and on one occasion when he had been to Brigg, I happened to be in the yard, and saw that he was drunk ; so I told him to give me the key of Broomielaw's box, and I would feed and do him up. He "smoled" a drunken smile, and gave me the key. I didn't much fancy the job, but as the head-collar hung outside the box, I half opened the door and gave the horse a bit of sugar, and whilst he was munching it I put on his head-collar, and put him on the rack-chain, set his bed fair with the fork, brought him his feed and some carrots, took his collar off, and locked him up for the night, taking the key with me. I was up with the lark in the morning, and found Phillips blubbering outside the box, and whining to be let go into the horse ; but I told him to be off, and did Broomielaw myself, and would not allow the drunkard to go into his box till mid-day, which salutary lesson lasted him for a short time. Another day, when Broomielaw was amiss, and the little Vet. didn't properly apply his prescription, I volunteered to do it, and as the stuff made him smart, the horse was very angry, and

some week or ten days afterwards, on my return from a visit, I met him at exercise in the village, and, as was my wont, I went up towards him, to give him a bit of sugar, when he suddenly let out straight from the shoulder with his off fore, and had I been a foot nearer, my gastronomic apparatus would have been cruelly altered, and it took me quite a week to make friends with him again. No one can deny that the intelligent animal recollected I had been the party who had caused him pain, and he owed me one for it.

In 1871, a neighbour of ours, Marshall of Grimsby, won the Goodwood Cup with Shannon, by Lambton; she started at 50 to 1 in a field of six, but did our locality no good. I had a fair race on the Cambridgeshire, when Fordham, who rode a wonderful race, won on Sabinus, starting at 33 to 1; Sterling and Allbrook, running a dead heat for second, only beaten a head from the winner. Allbrook ought to have won anyhow, but Jarvis rode his head off. In 1872, my cousin, John N. Astley's horse, Pell Mell, was only just beaten by a head for the Derby by Cremorne. It was a wonderful, well-kept, quiet good thing, and started at 50 to 1; but all were glad to see Henry Savile win, for he was a real good sportsman and a genial friend. A nice, fat, cheery chap, Joe Radcliffe, won the Cesarewitch

this year with a fine big three-year-old, Salvanus by Dollar, and little F. Archer rode him wonderfully well at 5 st. 7 lbs. ; the gigantic horse tried to run out of the course, but the tiny mannikin kept him straight.

It was in this year, 1872, that I lost my mother—ah ! and such a mother, the most perfect woman ever created, of that I have never had the least doubt. She was the most beautiful, most graceful, and most gifted of her sex, and, what was more to the point, she was as good as she looked. I have never seen any water-coloured drawings so good as hers, no matter which line she took up—portrait, landscape, or flower-painting—she was *facile princeps* at all. I may have heard—though I don't recollect it—a woman sing with as much feeling, or play the piano as bewitchingly as she could ; but I will swear I never heard any man or woman sing and play their own accompaniment as did she. She left ten of us to mourn her loss, six boys and four girls, and, though we were not all real cherubs without faults, she managed to rear us by kindness and example, so that none of us ever gave her any real trouble. In 1854 my mother—and she was not the only one—received a terrible shock, when, a day or two after the battle of the Alma, a telegram was handed to her by some unthinking idiot while she was on a

visit to the Ailesburys at Savernake : "*Captain Astley dangerously wounded.*" How that horrible word ever was used I don't know, it never occurred in any newspaper accounts; anyway it fairly knocked her over, and she never really was herself again afterwards ; and as I have already said, she died in December, 1872, and we, her six sons, carried her shoulder high to her grave (I never heard of a similar feat), and, though it is now over twenty years ago, I recollect well the buzz of admiration that ran through the crowd of villagers, as we paid this last tribute of respect to their kind friend, and our well-beloved parent.

Consequently, in 1873 I went to few races till the Newmarket Autumn, as my father died in July. He was knocked down by a stroke of paralysis some months before. He was a wonderful kind-hearted, good creature, but very shy (like me!), and had no dash or go about him ; he was an extraordinary powerfully built, handsome man, and ought to have been champion of England if he had ever cared to learn the art. I thought I would try my luck as a Bart. at Newmarket Autumn, but lost at all three meetings. Old Merry was in great form this year, for he won the Derby with Doncaster, and the Oaks with Marie Stuart ; then ran them both on their merits for the Leger (without a declaration), and

after a tremendous finish the mare won, a head. This winter I bought of Charley Kerr, Scamp, 2 yrs., by the Rake out of Lady Sophie, bred by Blanton, with whom I decided to train at Newmarket. The two-year-old had only run once, but Blanton was sanguine he would stay.

Our old place, Everleigh, had been let, but this autumn it was unoccupied ; so I went down there with a few friends to shoot the coverts. The largest farm on the estate was also tenantless in '74, worse luck, so I had to take it in hand and stock it—a rather difficult process to some folks, without a guinea in the bank. But I was very well, and full of confidence ; so one day I went down to Everleigh, and on getting out at Andover Station, a friend put his head out of one of the carriages and asked me “where I was going, and what was my errand ?” so I, at the top of my voice, halloed to him that “I was going to stock a 1600 acre farm without a guinea.” The sequel will show that there is no great harm in being outspoken in some instances. There were two good sales of farm-stock in the neighbourhood that week, and before attending them I went over to Salisbury to see if either of the banks there would stand me a bit of “ready ;” but, though they put it nicely, so as not to hurt my feelings, I was told that, “As I was not a

client of theirs and they had been hardish hit by the bad times, they regretted not being able to accommodate me." I thought it very mean of them, for I *only* wanted from four to five thousand pounds with which to buy implements, sheep, and horses, (bullocks on Salisbury Plain being an almost unknown quantity), and as I offered to give them a lien on my purchases, they could not lose much; however, they didn't bite.

The following day I attended a large sale at one of Lord Ailesbury's farms at Collingbourne, and, with the assistance of a friendly glass, I asked the auctioneer from Devizes, whether he would take my bids, candidly informing him that I had no money, and didn't rightly know when I should have any; but that I meant paying him as soon as I could. He was an excellent chap, and, though somewhat amused at my candour, exhorted me to bid for whatever I wanted, and *I did*. The same thing occurred the next day at Netheravon, only that the auctioneer came from Salisbury; but he was equally complaisant, and the result was that I not only bought all I wanted, but I flattered myself I bought *well*, to the tune of about £4000, and I really felt quite rich the next day when I saw strings of horses, implements, and sheep, all being stowed away on lower Everleigh farm.

I had selected a likely sort of bailiff, and off I

started to some race-meeting, to try and get a bit of ready to pay off those two charming auctioneers; but luck was against me, and I could not even hold my own, much less touch any coin. Well, I was at my wits' end, for I felt I ought in all honour to convince those two eminent men that their confidence in me was not misplaced. That day's post brought me a letter from my brother Hugh, to say that "the manager of the Capital and Counties Bank would be glad to have a chat with me." I got in the train and sped down to Warminster, and, finding the manager in the bank, he spake thus to me: "Our Mr. Brown was in the train the other day, and he gathered from what you said to a friend on the platform at Andover, that you wanted four to five thousand pounds to stock a farm at Everleigh, and he desired me to inform you that you can have an overdraft for four thousand pounds at our bank." Deary me! how I loved the Browns—old Brown, middle-aged Brown, and young Brown, whitey Brown, or any coloured Brown, were to me glorified into angels, and all with wings. Of course I didn't disclose what a fix the blessed Brown had got me out of, but at the same time I was very grateful for the courteous accommodation, and all I had to do was to leave my signature and take with me a blank cheque-book.

Now, which is best: to whisper with bated breath of your impecuniosity, or to proclaim it on the house-top—no, I mean on the railway-station? If you can help it, *never have a secret*, say I. Well, I paid for all my farm-stock, and the following year was lucky enough to find a tenant, and realised a profit on my purchases, paying off the Capital and Counties with hearty thanks, and one cheer more for “our Mr. Brown.”

The first rent-day after my father's death I went down with my lawyer, good old Peake, to take the rents at Everleigh, and Sir John Kelk was travelling in the same carriage, going to have a final look at Tedworth (old Tom Assheton Smith's late property) before deciding to buy it, for, I think, £200,000, and when we got out at Andover, he confided to Peake that he would sooner buy Everleigh, and bid him offer me £130,000 for it. But I scorned the idea of selling the old place then, although my son would be glad to take less for it now. It is one of the nicest places (of its sort) in England, capital shooting, a very comfortable house, and the one of best training-grounds, with every variety of gallop, in Europe—only wants training-stables building—and, had my good father been willing, Sir Joseph Hawley would have put up stables and trained there. I wish he had.

CHAPTER VII.

Brocklesby Country—Many good Horsemen—J. M. Richardson of Limber—Disturbance and Reugny—Win Goodwood Stakes with Scamp—Enter the House of Commons—My Grandfather's Election Accounts—Rowland Winn (Lord St. Oswald)—The Lawson Liquor Bill—I answer as to my own—Horse-play while Canvassing—I bring in a Bill to Restrain Farm-servants administering Deleterious Drugs to their Horses—Rather too free in Speaking my Mind on Teetotalism, also about the Irish Party—I am called upon to Retract—Mr. Sullivan keeps the Ball Rolling—A Maiden Speech in the House—Chevalier O'Clery, M.P. for Wexford—All's Well that Ends Well—Mr. Mundella—Quiet Moments in the Snuggery of the Serjeant-at-Arms (Gossett)—My Opinion as to the Merits of being M.P.—I lose my Seat at the General Election of 1880—Vow never to stand again—Am presented with my Portrait—Sit to Sir John Millais—Agricultural Shows—I appear in the Arena as a Competitor—The Water-jump at Lincoln Show—I retire from the Show-ring in favour of the Light-Weights.

To alter the scene a bit, we will return to Lincolnshire, where, in the neighbourhood of Brocklesby, every Spring our Hunt Steeplechases came off, and very useful cross country horses were owned and bred thereabouts, while few Hunts could boast of so many good riders between the flags. Foremost amongst them was J. M. Richardson (Pussy) of Limber, and in 1873 he trained (at home) Dis-

turbance, and won the Grand National on him, beating 27 others. The following year he won again on Reugny.* Both horses belonged to Capt. Machell, who used to be down in our country a good deal in those days during the hunting season. It was a wonderful feat for so young a man as Richardson, to train and ride two consecutive winners of the Grand National.

I ought to have paid more attention than I did to the little stable at Limber, for it was only seven miles from us, but I confess I underrated the establishment, and therefore won but little on its successes. Not so the neighbours generally, for most of them had their bit on, and much money circulated in consequence.

One and all were wishful to celebrate the double success of our popular young rider ; so a dinner was organised at Brigg, and I never presided over a more enthusiastic assembly than filled the large Corn Exchange the night of the feast. The dinner-tickets I had printed with the apt inscription : "Disturbance, but no Row." I forget now how many dozen of champagne were consumed, but I recollect one of the guests—and a very good sort, too—backing into one of the large tubs that

* Marcus Beresford's Chimney-sweep, 2, Jones ; Dick Thorold's Merlin, 3, Adams.

had been filled with ice for the champagne, and down he flopped to my immense amusement, and his own consternation. I didn't envy him his long drive home that night, for he had no change.

J. M. Richardson was, and is now, one of the best performers I ever saw over a country, and few men who have ridden as much as he has have got off with so few falls, which fact is, doubtless, attributable to his exquisitely light hands; no horse ever really pulled with him. When he got married he gave up steeplechasing, more's the pity. However, he married one of the very best, and at the next General Election we all hope he will be our future member.

Two great events happened to me in 1874—I won the Goodwood Stakes with Scamp, and was sent to the House of Commons. I enjoyed Scamp's victory a long way the most, so we will take that first. After a satisfactory gallop with some fair trying tackle, I engaged T. Glover (or, as we called him, "Tommy Clover") to ride Scamp in the Goodwood Stakes, and as he won comfortably, I had a good fair race on him; but the price didn't average anything like Blackdown's had done. However, I won about £4000 on the week, and went on to Brighton, where Scamp won the stakes as well; so I couldn't grumble. Blanton had brought

him out in perfect condition, the horse looked as round as an apple, and yet was fit to run for his life ; and that's the art of training, for surely it is much pleasanter to see your horse look big and above himself, ready to run another race or two ; than to see him drawn too fine, with deep water-marks down his quarters, and "a weary of life" look about him.

The morning of the Goodwood Stakes, when I was out on my hack seeing the horses do their work on the course, I met old Tom Jennings, than whom we have no more practical long-distance trainer, and he said to me : "I wish you luck, Sir John, but friend Charley has been too lenient with Scamp ; he wants half a dozen more rousing gallops." Good old Tom ! he had given his Goodwood Cup horse too many "rousing gallops," and couldn't produce him on the day, though on the spot. Scamp ran third in the Leger, and won me a Queen's Plate at Shrewsbury, where I bought a nice mare out of a selling-race, May Day, 4 yrs., by Thormanby out of Blue Bell, and won a race with her the following day ; but she had not the best of legs, and I only just managed to get her through a match at Newmarket July, in 1875, when she broke down, and I sold her to Blanton for a brood mare. That match was a real good one—May Day, 5 yrs., and Tripaway, 4 yrs., 8 st. 7 lbs. each, T.Y.C.

Fordham rode mine, and Archer, Lord Rosslyn's mare, and the Kid* just won by a head—he was a wonder in a match, and no mistake. Broomie-knowe, the first winner I bred by Broomielaw, won me a race that year at Ascot, and two at Newmarket.

I now became a Legislator—oh! dear, was there ever such a parody on that exalted title! I had always vowed nothing should induce me to stick M.P. at the end of my name. My good old grandfather had represented the Northern Division of Wiltshire for fourteen years, and the honour of gaining two contested elections cost him over £100,000. He had been careful to have a summary of his expenses methodically noted down in a book (which I have now), and the items are too ridiculous; for instance, “ribbons”—whatever that may mean—came to nearly £5000; the boots and the chambermaid at the Black Bear at Devizes, are each down for £25, and they were no better treated than other servants at all the other Tory hotels of the principal towns in the Division.

To pay this heavy sum he sold old family property in Warwickshire and Staffordshire. The Howes and the Dartmouths bought the principal part of it, and in the fly-leaf of this curious account-

* George Fordham.

book is inscribed in his own handwriting, and duly signed by him: "I have had these accounts carefully compiled and vouched, to warn those that come after me not to enter into similar folly." This warning, coupled with the knowledge that I was in no way fitted for the House of Commons, had determined me never to spend a bob in trying for a seat; but when my Lincolnshire friends—and they were legion—put it to me that if I would only stand there would be no opposition, and that all my expenses would be paid, I softly gave way, and straightway went round the constituency in conjunction with Rowland Winn (afterwards created Lord St. Oswald), who then represented the Division, and whose late colleague, Sir M. Cholmeley, a Liberal, had just died.

I had never discussed or thought much about politics. I distrusted old Gladstone, and had no great admiration for Disraeli. However, I went for the old Tory colours, the penchant for which had cost my old granddad so much. The very first place I visited with Winn was Crowle, in the Isle of Axholme, and there, from a waggon drawn up in the market-place, we had to address the pick of the voters in their district. After I had followed the sitting member, and announced in clumsy fashion my earnest hope that I might occupy the proud

position of their representative in the House of Commons, and mildly touched on two or three topics of local interest, I boldly challenged any man present to ask me questions on any subject. I believe the Permissive Bill was at that time exciting much interest in the country, but I was totally non-plussed, when a truculent looking politician stepped forward, and asked me my opinion of Sir Wilfrid Lawson's "Liquor Bill"; however, I pulled myself together and promptly stated that I didn't know much about Sir W. Lawson's Liquor Bill, but I did know that *mine* was a deuced sight too high that year. This naïve remark was received with much cheering, and my questioner, who had a long list of interrogatories ready for me, was advised on all sides to shut up, which he did, and my fame as a deeply read, as well as *ready* politician was established all over that part of the country.

I had many curious experiences whilst canvassing, but was well received in nearly every district I visited; the only exception was at one of the Wold villages, where some roughs had got together at the dark end of a loft (dimly lighted by tallow dips) where the meeting was held, and there made hideous noises. The brutes didn't like me telling them that they dared not come to the front and have it out; so when I drove away in the dark,

smoking my cigar, one of them took a pretty shot with a stone, and actually broke my cigar in two, the stump remaining in my mouth. I was returned without opposition, and the following year came the General Election of 1875, when, though several Radical candidates were talked of, thank goodness! never a one turned up. Winn and I went round the constituency again, and duly took our seats as before. My good old colleague urged me to belong to the Carlton Club, but I had an idea that politics were the all-absorbing topics there, and as I thought I might get too saturated with them, I firmly declined talking shop, except in the House of Commons and its precincts; the Turf and the Marlborough were good enough clubs for me.

I attended to my duties fairly well, and in a weak moment was induced by some of my agricultural friends to bring in a Bill, making it a punishable offence for the men who looked after cart-horses, to give them any poisonous compound without their master's leave. Arsenic and antimony, were the principal destructives which these horsemen were in the habit of buying and giving to their charges, with the intention of improving the sleek appearance of their coats. These poisons, when administered in too large, or too frequent quantities, caused serious havoc among the best agricultural horses

on our Wolds, and I got up a whole heap of statistics and facts, of the harm caused by this baneful practice. It is extraordinary how many horses were killed outright, and hundreds of those that survived had their constitutions destroyed, and gradually wasted away without any apparent cause.

The first night I got leave to introduce my Horse-Poisoning Bill I shall never forget, for, though I had no difficulty in talking sense or otherwise, either before or after dinner, to my constituents on subjects that were of far more interest to them than to me ; yet, when I got up in the House of Commons and essayed to speak a few words on a subject which did interest me, and the facts connected with which I was really well posted, my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth, and became like dry leather, and I became painfully aware that several unkind M.P.'s took a delight in torturing their young friend by asking silly questions about his Bill ; while old Butt, Q.C., the leader of the Irish Brigade, openly declared I was trying to stop the poisoning of race-horses, and Sir William Harcourt protested against punishing the horsemen, who were only actuated by a laudable desire to improve the appearance of their horses, and these two potent enemies put their names down to block my poor little Bill.

I coaxed the old Irishman to withdraw his oppo-

sition by assuring him the purport of my Bill had nothing to do with racehorses, and with the valuable assistance of the then member for Cambridgeshire, I convinced Harcourt, that a man taking his master's wheat or cake, to give to his cart-horse, without leave, was liable to a fine or imprisonment. A nice time I had of it searching in the vast library of the House of Commons, for precedents to satisfy that astute but stubborn old lawyer, and, had it not been for the assistance of H. Chaplin, I should never have got through the third reading; but "Right is Might," and my Bill was ordered to be printed. Well, though I say it as hadn't ought, it's about the most useful little bit of common sense, that poor agriculturists have been treated to for many a long day, and, though occasionally its powers have to be exercised, yet the deterrent effect of my Bill has been most successful.

I sometimes was guilty of using rather strong language at meetings that my constituents asked me to attend—convivial or otherwise—and though I don't believe I ever exceeded the bounds of honest truth, yet the bare truth, unless a little wrapped up, will at times provoke much criticism, not to say heart-burnings. At the risk of wearying my readers I must give two instances of the trouble I got into from not mincing my words. I was

chairman at a dinner at Grimsby, of the Licensed Victuallers' Association of the district, and, in giving the toast of the evening, I dilated on the absurdity of any man of sense, and gifted with any control over himself, becoming a teetotaller, and I stated that a teetotaller in my opinion was a "poor devil," explaining that somewhat strong definition, by arguing that any party who took the pledge, did so because he could not trust himself to take a fair whack of liquor without taking too much, and therefore was a pitiable atom of society.

Notwithstanding that my conviction was cordially endorsed by my friends at the table, a constituent at a neighbouring town, on reading my speech in the newspaper, wrote me to say that, though he was a teetotaller, he was not a "poor devil," and invited me to come and see for myself. I at once replied to his letter by observing that, on consideration, I was inclined to think "poor devil" was perhaps too strong a term, and that I would substitute "poor creature" for it, and the next time I was in his neighbourhood I would certainly take the opportunity of accepting his kind invite, and share half a pint of hot tea with him and his belongings (if he had any); and I did, and was much pleased to find that, though a fierce Radical, he so much appreciated my character that he would not vote against me

when next he had the chance ; but, mind you, he was a chemist, and therefore, had every facility at hand for counteracting the deleterious effects, caused by a strict *régime* of tea-leaves and snowballs.

The other instance of too strong a vocabulary, was at a luncheon-party, where some two hundred good men and true cheered their new member, and their own inner man, before an auction-sale of some first-class shearling Lincoln tups at Owersby. In responding to the toast of "the House of Commons" I made a little too free with the characters of a certain section of the Irish members, whose sole object seemed to consist in obstructing every useful measure brought forward by the Government. I quote from memory, but I believe I told my readers, that I had mixed with many crowds of ruffians—as I was fond of sport of all kinds—and, therefore, had considerable experience of the rough element, but my conviction was that, I had never met under one roof, forty more confounded rascals than Ireland had sent up to represent her in the House of Commons. Though there was a lot of truth in it, yet the way I put it was a bit too stiff, no doubt, and in consequence I had several letters from the Irish members, many of whom seemed keen to have a shot at me.

A certain Chevalier wrote most to the point, and

as I was told he was not half a bad fellow, I admitted to him I felt the term "rascal" was a bit too strong, and I would withdraw it; however, that didn't suit one, Sullivan, who got up in the House and rated me soundly for my truism, and I got leave from the Speaker to give a personal explanation the next day. I went down to the House that afternoon, feeling about as uncomfortable as I ever did in my life, for I mistrusted my powers of rhetoric in that august chamber. I find in a cutting from some newspaper the following, which I believe is about a correct version of what happened on the occasion :—

"Sir John made his maiden speech to-night, and a charming performance it was. Sir John, you will know, is the author of the famous speech, in which the Irish members of the House of Commons were delicately described as numbering in their ranks, 'forty of the most confounded rascals ever seen.' Mr. Sullivan had made it appear last night, that Sir John had apologised for these expressions at the point of the pistol, vicariously presented by Chevalier O'Clery, M.P. for Wexford.

"This had troubled Sir John Astley a great deal more than his conscience had, in the matter of his speech; and here he was standing mid-way across the

floor (a serious breach of the rules of the House) with his hands kept out of his trousers pockets evidently only by violent efforts of moral suasion, and talking to the House of Commons, as if it were the assembled mess in barracks. 'There are a good many people who mightn't know I'd been in the army;' that being the gallant Baronet's modest way of hinting at the fact that he had been in the fore front of the battle of the Alma, and had brought away three wounds. 'I have never been afraid of any individual yet,' he continued; and a buzz of sympathy with Sir John went through the House, as it was comprehended how profoundly he was impressed with the surrounding circumstances, when he thus used so highly proper a word as 'individual,' when 'chap' must have come so trippingly to his tongue.

"The first appearance of the gallant member for North Lincolnshire was undoubtedly a great success. A burly, handsome man is Sir John, with opulent white hair crowning a black-bearded face, that laughed all over from eyes to mouth, as he declared that he had 'never had the least fear of an Irishman.' He found great favour in the eyes of honourable members, and resumed his seat amid cheers that could not have been louder, if his blundering, awkward, hesitating speech had been rounded by

the periods of Cicero, and delivered with the skill of Demosthenes."

Cheer or no cheer, I was wonderful pleased when I came to a full stop, and a lot of men came up and shook hands with me from both sides of the House. One of the most vigorous in his congratulations was Mundella, who assured me with much feeling that I was a fine specimen of an English country gentleman. He was, doubtless, a good old judge, and I was very near asking him to come outside and join a select party of my pals in a friendly glass over it; but I let him off. I met the Chevalier above mentioned, some two or three years since in the street, and he then assured me that my opinion of his old colleagues was not a bit exaggerated, as he had found to his cost. How those forty senators (or their successors) have been going on since, is notorious; and I only wish I could as correctly pick out now, the true form of the equine competitors in the Derby, or Autumn Handicaps, as I did the characters of the Irish brigade in the House of Commons in the seventies.

I think I had best finish up my parliamentary career straight off. Well, the precincts of St. Stephen's held few charms for me, and I was always glad when I could get out of that political

atmosphere ; had it not been for the good old Serjeant-at-Arms (Gossett), who had a snug room upstairs where most of the cheeriest members used to congregate, and over a drop of Scotch and a cigar discuss the leading topics of the day, capping each other's good stories whilst waiting for the division bell to ring, I don't know what I should have done. I can well understand a man, who wants to extend his acquaintance, or is desirous of obtaining some remunerative appointment in or under the Government of the day, sacrificing the pleasures of home and other congenial pursuits for the sake of a seat in Parliament ; but to a country gentleman who already knows pretty well all the best men in the House, and has no hankering after office, or, if he has, feels that he don't possess the brains or qualifications requisite to lift him out of the ordinary herd—that man, I say, I cannot understand taking much trouble to become a M.P. ; for even when the House is up, and you retire to the bosom of your family, you are allowed no rest, you are constantly called upon to attend meetings all over the constituency, and are considered fair game for silly questions and childish interrogatories, in some cases put to you by creatures who have not education enough to write them down. No ! it isn't good enough in my humble opinion. All honour, at the same time, do I accord

to those who think it is, and I should certainly vote for a medal with a suitable inscription being bestowed on every M.P. who can kiss the book, and declare that his sole object in entering the House of Commons is summed up in the motto, "For my God, my Queen, and my Country."

Notwithstanding my feelings as expressed above, at the General Election of 1880 I was actually induced to stand again, and a Radical candidate by the name of Laycock appeared on the scene, who hailed from the neighbourhood of Retford. He was almost a stranger in Lincolnshire, and though report had it that he possessed considerable command of money, yet his candidature was not considered likely to upset either Winn or myself; however, we buckled to, and did the canvassing and meetings trick all over again. Everywhere we went I recommended the electors, if they wished for a change, to at all events stick to Winn, than whom they could not possibly have a more painstaking or hard-working member. The polling day duly arrived; of course I attended at the counting of the votes, and there gathered with pretty good certainty, that the Radical topped the poll, and presently the figures were proclaimed from the Town Hall: Laycock, 4159; Winn,

3949; Astley, 3865; and I was free, not to say kicked out.

I could not have believed that I should have been so mortified as I was at the result. I there and then took my dying oath that I would never stand again—a declaration for which I was much blamed at the time, but which has stood me in good stead ever since, as I should have been constrained to have another try. Well, I had been their member six years, and my many friends decided to present me with my portrait, out of sympathy at my failure, and that amply recompensed me; for at heart I was real glad to find myself free, though no man likes to be beaten at any game. Sir John Millais was good enough to take me on as a model, and after six sittings he produced a picture that I, and those that come after me, will ever be proud of, and which the late Lord Wilton (an acknowledged judge of art) told me one day, as I met him coming out of the Royal Academy, he considered the very best portrait of a man he had ever seen. I had it photogravured, and sent a copy round to pretty well all the subscribers of over ten shillings, and so ended my experience as a County Member.

I believe I gained very many friends, and made very few (if any) enemies in the constituency. On

no occasion do I meet so many of my old friends who helped me *con amore* in my canvassing, as at our county Agricultural Shows, which come off every year in July; but I cannot now gratify them by giving an equestrian performance, as I used to do when I was their M.P. I believe it was on four occasions, that I competed for the jumping prizes on a good old hunter, a perfect and confidential fencer, that was bound to clear any obstacle, not excepting iron rails or sheep nets, but barring water. At the Show at Grimsby there was, fortunately, no water-jump, and I landed the first prize cleverly; the lad that rode the second was over seven stone lighter than I was, a fair margin even at this game of romps. Being naturally elated at my success, I the following year was rash enough to attempt the performance again; but, bad luck to it! there was a water-jump, which caused me grave misgiving: for, to tell the truth, my old gee and I were not fond of water-jumping. If there was a fair bottom we always walked through any water-obstacle, and, if not, we galloped over it by means of the nearest bridge,

So, on that lovely, bright, hot day at Lincoln Show, I divested myself of my coat, waistcoat, and hat (all being my best, that were to appear the following week on the Lawn at Goodwood), and

then, with a cigar in my mouth and a lady's parasol in my hand, I took my turn at the jumps. The old gee and I got on first-rate till we arrived at the water, and then—well, then we both seemed bent on a grand performance. He went at it hard all, I got firm hold of my baccy, likewise of the parasol, and it looked good odds on a mighty fly—but deuce a bit! As soon as ever his keen eye caught sight of the water over the guard fence, he scotched a bit, and jumping short, came down on his knees on the edge of the water, and I went over his head splendid, and turned two or three somersaults on the (fortunately soft) grass, fairly bringing the house down.

Deary me! how the crowd did laugh, and large bids were made to me to have another shy at it; but no, not for me! I offered the mount to any one, just to show the company how it ought to be done; but not a soul took advantage of my generosity; and so I put my clothes on again, and was soon right for my speech after the annual big luncheon. The most creditable part of the entertaining cropper was, that my cigar was not interfered with, nor the parasol any the worse, and, beyond a slight dash of green on my small clothes, there was no harm done. But my feelings were somewhat hurt after luncheon, by overhearing one of the crowd remark to his

neighbour: "If that old fool, Jack Astley, had not ridden his 'oss hisself, he would have won." That was hot, very—though not true. I subsequently failed to take a prize at another match or two, and then left the competition to the light weights.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Few Words on Coursing—Goodlake of Wadley and other Coursing Celebrities—My Early Experiences with the Long-Tails—Jerry Goodlake urges me to Start a Meeting at Elsham—Coursing Anecdotes—No certainty even with Two Runners—Coomassie and Waterloo Cup—A “Dreamer of Dreams”—Spring of 1875 appointed a Steward of Jockey Club—The Sphynx Fraud—Mr. Justice Lindley—Warren and Longland get Six and Nine Months respectively—The New Stand on the Rowley Mile—Mr. Holland’s Assistance—Also Mr. Jordan. Clerk of the Works—Hard to Satisfy every one—A Fine Investment—Wage War against the Touts during my Period of Office—Death of Admiral Rous in 1877—A Heavy Blow to the Turf generally—The Rous Memorial Hospital—Land given by the late Sir Richard Wallace—The Admiral’s Mistake with Sutton—Death in the following Year (1878) of George Payne—A Sound Reference in all Matters requiring Fine Judgment—Amusing to watch the Old Friends over a Game of Billiards—Regretted by all.

To vary the sports of the field a bit, I will now touch on coursing. When quite a lad, some 10 or 12 years old, I had been initiated into the ways and manners of the greyhound: for my father, who was a very keen courser, from time to time possessed some very fair dogs; but I fancy he hardly held his own amongst the then famous lovers of the leash, such as Harry Biggs, Wadham Locke, Ralph

Etwall, Alec Wyndham of Dinton, and Goodlake of Wadley. As soon as I was considered strong enough, I used to be entrusted with a brace of long-tails in a slip, and I was enjoined to hold on to them like grim death until my father, having gone two or three hundred yards, waved his pocket handkerchief as a signal that I was to slip the dogs to him, so as to try their speed. A nice time I had of it! often being dragged on to my poor little tummy by the eager hounds; and if I did happen to let them go with the slip on, didn't I catch it!

Fine old Salisbury Plain was a rare place for coursing, and the hares ran very stout on our downs. What gruelling courses I have seen on Snail Down, not a mile from Everleigh, and up over Beacon Hill, the Amesbury side of Stonehenge, ay, and among those very Druidical remains themselves! When I shifted from Wilts to Lincolnshire (which, of course, I had to do when I got wed), I was urged by my coursing friends (especially dear old Jerry Goodlake) to get up a public coursing meeting over the Carrs of Elsham and Worlaby—some 2000 acres of flat land, mostly grass, and divided into fields by dykes half full of water. With Jerry's able assistance I started the Brigg Coursing Meeting, and at Corbett's death I asked five or six pals

fond of the sport, to stay at Elsham for the three days' meeting, and, there being plenty of hares (for I never shot one on that 2000 acres), some first-rate sport was provided for the large company that pretty well filled the little town of Brigg. I always took the chair at the dinner and draw at the Angel Hotel, and we met the crowd at 9 A.M. each morning, and with luck managed to run some forty or fifty courses a day; but it was very cold work in December and January. However, Jerry and I were generally to be seen on the box-seat of my brake, from which a good view of the sport could always be obtained. I was in the habit of yoking two Percheron mares to our conveyance, and with these powerful animals we could go anywhere, and, if there had been much rain, in places we had to plough through mud nearly axle-deep.

I used to stand luncheon to all comers, and gave all the hares away to the coursers and their trainers, not forgetting the Press, a very intelligent and ardent detachment. I hardly ever used to bet on the courses, though there was every facility for so doing, as the bookies that followed coursing always showed up in goodly numbers. But it's a tickle job is coursing, even supposing that it's all on the square, and that isn't, or used not to be, *always*; for when there are only two runners the tempta-

tion to make one safe is necessarily very great. My readers will most of them recollect that celebrated coursing-match at Newmarket, where the non-favourite, though the best dog, seemed by the betting, which was very heavy, to have little chance of winning ; and no more he had if he could only have kept the half sheep (that he had been treated to before being put into the slips) on his stomach. But that day hares were scarce, and the non-favourite became uneasy and expectorated the mutton, and the favourite had just time to eat it up when puss was found and away they went. But the party that paid for the mutton, had to pay the stakes and bets too, and serve him right ; though he was a trifle unlucky, we must allow.

One day at our Brigg Meeting, a good sort, who wrote in the *Field* under the name of "Robin Hood," came up to our brake and told us he knew something real good, and that we must lay the odds on the favourite for the next course, as it was a dead "cert.;" so Jerry and I both chanced a bit on this extra good thing. When slipped to a real stout hare the non-favourite seemed unable to move, and was led lengths. In the run up the favourite kept driving the hare, but could make little impression on her single-handed, so got pumped out and lay down, whilst the other dog warmed up, and, after

a tremendously long course, the non-favourite's flag went up and we lost our money. We were rather hard on "Robin Hood" when he approached our trap with a very crestfallen air, and he thus spake: "Well, wouldn't you have thought you knew something to bet on if you had been me, for, just as it was getting light this morning, I saw the poor dog being fomented and then sewn up: for his kennel companion had given him a proper bite, and no one could believe he would be able to go out of a walk. But there, he must have been a game dog. He is dead now, so it's no use finding fault with me," and, sure enough, the poor brute had run till he dropped and died. These two cases will, I fancy, convince the most sceptical that there is no "cert." in coursing.

The only time I ever did any good on the Waterloo Cup was when Coomassie won in 1877. It was this way: at luncheon the Sunday before, a friend asked if I believed in dreams? "Not as a rule," I replied. "Well, but this one is a bit out of the common," he answered. "A mutual friend of mine and yours, and a veracious M.P., who cares nothing, and knows less, about coursing, dreamt the other night that a greyhound called Coomassie won the Waterloo Cup, and before he went to sleep he didn't know there was such

a greyhound in existence." After turning this dream over in my mind, I decided, as I was going down to Altcar on the Monday evening to see the Blue Riband of the leash run for, to stroll into Tattersall's that afternoon, and I took 500 to 15 about Coomassie. Later on I took the evening train for Liverpool, and arrived at the Adelphi Hotel just as my friend Goodlake was calling over the card, and, curiously enough, just as I reached the crowded doorway into the banquet-room I heard him say: "Will anybody back Coomassie?" but, as no one wanted to, he passed her name. However, when I got up to the head of the table, beside the chairman, I asked John Robinson the price of Coomassie, and he told me 40 ponies—40 hundred if I liked; but I was satisfied with 1000 to 25, and was well chided by Jerry G. for backing one that had no chance.

Next morning at daylight we drove off to Altcar, and Coomassie won her two courses cleverly. Next day she repeated the performance; so, hedging on the third day, I was on lavender, for I stood to win a thousand by Coomassie, and three hundred by each of the runners up. The dream came off right, and I was paid my money; very few of the *cognoscenti* or coursing sharps won, and, had it not been for that dream, I should have had a bad

time. Coursing now, is not the popular sport it was, for, though the Brigg Meeting still continues, the entries are poor in number, and there seems no chance now of filling two sixty dog stakes as of yore. Jerry G. at one time owned some good dogs, and didn't do badly with them; but he had real bad luck at one of our Brigg Meetings, for his best dog in trying to jump the biggest drain on our Carrs, broke his jaw against the opposite bank, and had to be destroyed. Farewell to coursing, say I; it's too cold and uncertain a sport for an "aged broker," though Colonel North has cut the record by winning the Waterloo Cup three times, and divided once, with Fullerton.

In the spring of 1875 I was appointed a steward of the Jockey Club, being nominated by Lord Falmouth, the retiring steward (the rule being that each steward should serve three years only), H. Chaplin being senior steward, and Admiral Rous number two. In those days the stewards had not so much work to do as they have now, but we three had a very busy time; for, on a motion of Chaplin's, it was decided by the Club that the rules of racing should be drafted afresh, and rearranged. Chaplin took an enormous amount of interest and trouble in this business. In 1876, on his retirement, he nominated Lord Hardwicke as

his successor, and in that year a gross case of fraud was brought to light. The malefactors were three men named Longland, Warren, and Garner respectively, who hailed from that centre of the boot-making trade, Northampton. They were probably red-hot Radicals, but, if so, that did not make them any the better.

Well, they bought a mare called Sphynx, at Sutton Coldfield races, for 29 guineas, and entered her as a two-year-old the next day, rechristening her Glance, by Outfit-Mead, in the Trial Stakes at Wolverhampton; but, for fear she should be recognised as Sphynx, four-years-old, she was put in a box that night at the Hen and Chickens Hotel at Birmingham and carefully altered in appearance. Her tail was cut short, a white blaze on her face and the grey heel of her off hind leg, were painted with caustic. The next day, as one of the party was being driven to the course in a brake, he spied a light weight named Weston, and engaged him to ride the mare at 6 st. 10 lbs., giving him instructions to get well away and go right through with her—very much the same orders, as you will recollect, old Forth gave to the rider of Little Wonder before he started for the Derby. These orders were carried out, and the mare won comfortably, as she was

pretty well bound to do at the weight, having two years in hand.

Now, it rained hard during the race, and when the jockey, Weston, was taking the martingale off to weigh in, he noticed some queer coloured stuff drop off the mare's nose on to his sleeve, and that, coupled with the little difficulty as to her pedigree, was the cause of the stakes being withheld, and an inquiry instituted into the identity of the animal by the stewards of the Jockey Club. I have my notes of the case somewhere *in extenso*, for, as the dear old Admiral was so very deaf, he deputed me to take the evidence. And a most curious—not to say amusing—inquiry it was. Had not the man Garner turned Queen's evidence, there is no certainty the ruffians could have been convicted. Before our tribunal no evidence on oath could be taken, and though I fancy that detail would have made but little difference to the late Mr. Bradlaugh's constituents, yet they would hardly have lied so glibly had they kissed the book.

This inquiry lasted some time, and the room being hot, both my colleagues resigned themselves to slumber, and I must confess, didn't snore in unison. It was very funny, and I am afraid I transgressed the ascetic rules of decorum, when

the junior steward suddenly woke up as one of the culprits was asseverating his innocence with some strong flavoured expletives, and expressed himself, in no measured terms, "that he was a villain of the deepest dye," his anger being in no way diminished, when the scoundrel coolly remarked that "to the best of his knowledge he had not come there to be sworn at." All three men separately and distinctly declared, that the mare was not their property, and it suddenly struck me that she might in that case become mine; so, after the inquiry was over, I told the man Garner that he must send the mare to me at Newmarket, and if he did so he might escape prosecution. On the morrow the animal duly arrived, and a very clever, sharp little mare she was, but remarkably good to know, for she had a most peculiar straggling blaze down her face, a grey fetlock behind, and a deeply cut chipped knee. I kept her a week or so at Newmarket, when one morning two of the men appeared and wanted me to give up the mare. As they had positively declared to me that neither of them owned a hair in her tail, and no other party had put in a claim, I told them I should keep her, as I fancied she would make a nice hack for one of my girls. So they had to go off without her, but subsequently, on my asking a legal

opinion, I was advised to give her up, and I had to do so.

What became of her I never knew for certain; though it was rumoured that she found her way to the stables of another notorious wrongdoer at Oswestry. My notes were laid before counsel, and, though the Admiral was at first against prosecuting the parties on account of the expense, yet, as just then there was undoubtedly much villainy of this kind being successfully perpetrated, and as a clearer case could hardly be produced, he gave in, and the two men were tried before Mr. Justice Lindley, and, Warren was sentenced to six months', and Longland to nine months' hard labour. I forgot to mention that it came out in evidence before me, though not before the judge (as I understood), that the mare was hurried off from Wolverhampton the same day as she won, to Peterborough, and a witness told me he helped to wash the caustic off her at the Great Northern Hotel; moreover, he believed that she ran and won a small hurdle-race that very week somewhere in Suffolk as a four-year-old.

During 1876 I was Chairman of the Committee for arranging the new rules of racing, and had to give much attention to this complicated work. The labour of the Committee was not in vain; for, as compared with the old rules, the new code is

certainly a great improvement. I was also saddled with the no small responsibility of building the new stand at the finish of the Rowley mile. Lord Falmouth during his Stewardship had—under his guidance—caused a plan to be prepared, and it really was high time some new building should be erected ; for the old stand was not only too cramped and uncomfortable, but the structure had for some time been condemned as unsafe, no one being allowed to use the upper part of it, and that was the only place from which a decent view of the races could be obtained. When the tottering old place was pulled down, it was a marvel how the favoured members of the Jockey Club had escaped serious accident ; for the walls were built for the most part of bricks laid lengthways, with a wide hollow between the inside and outside shell, filled in with rubble and chalk, there being hardly any bond.

I undertook the construction of the present stand, with the assistance of the late Mr. Holland, as architect, and a young clerk of the works named Jordan, who had superintended a great amount of building for me in Wiltshire and Lincolnshire. A very energetic and clever young chap he was, and a firm believer in the strength and endurance of cement concrete for the particular purpose of a stand in so exposed a situation. I don't believe

any material short of the best quarried stone or granite—neither of which were obtainable—would have answered so well, although now some of the old hands grumble at times, and declare they “wish the new stand had never been built;” yet, as age tells on them, and they find the expense of a hack, and the discomfort of betting in bad weather at the old ring opposite the Bushes is saved them, their growls grow fainter and gradually less; while all truthful sportsmen must acknowledge, that they can get a good view of the races from almost any part of the raised ground or stand. A finer investment was never heard of, for the money that passed through my hands for the buildings and paddocks was only some £20,000, and now the income from the new stands and paddocks, in the gross, is about £25,000 per annum. This sum forms part of the very large contribution of added money given by the Jockey Club, and which at the present time amounts to close on £69,000.

During my three years’ stewardship I greatly harassed the touts; but they have survived my persecution of them, and flourished to an extraordinary extent. I really believe that their numbers, and necessarily divided opinions, as published and circulated to their private employers, now does an owner no great harm, and when fishing in Norway,

or otherwise enjoying himself in distant climes, he eagerly reads of the doings of his thoroughbreds, no matter where trained, and is afforded a certain amount of satisfaction by the daily reports ; though he must at times be puzzled by the glaring discrepancies between the horse-watchers' statements, and his intelligent trainer's account of the well-being and work done, by his cherished Leger candidate, or hoped-for Autumn Handicap winner.

It was in 1877, during my term of office as senior steward, that the good old Admiral passed away. His death was a heavy blow to all racing men, but more particularly to those so continually associated with him as the members of the Jockey Club were. It was resolved to erect a hospital and almshouses to his memory, to be called the Rous Memorial. Some five thousand pounds was soon subscribed, and a committee appointed to carry out the work, of which I was an active member. The late Sir R. Wallace generously gave an acre of land, and on this site was erected the most useful set of buildings Newmarket possesses, and many lives have been saved by this admirable institution.

Admiral Rous was indeed a wonderful man, and the same energy and indomitable pluck that enabled him to bring his ship *The Pique* safely home, after being disabled by the loss of her rudder,

stood him in good stead in the management of the highest interests of the Turf; and, though some described him as a "Dictator," yet he was always amenable to calm reasoning; he might be led, but could not be driven. The labour he gratuitously devoted to handicapping was thoroughly appreciated, and if now and again he made a mistake in the form of a horse, he was always willing to acknowledge it. His worst production that I recollect was in the Cambridgeshire Handicap of 1875, when he put the ridiculous weight of 5 st. 13 lbs. on the four-year-old back of Sutton, a horse that had shown some fair form as a three-year-old; but in this case the good old Admiral too readily believed the stories told him of this cripple's broken-down condition, and never dreamed of his seeing the starting-post, much less catching the judge's eye.

I tried to bring in a rule, that in no case should a four-year-old or upwards be handicapped within a stone of the bottom weight, but could not obtain a sufficient following to carry it, though I still believe it would be much fairer on the three-year-olds and good old horses, and would be well liked by the handicappers.

The following year, 1878, another good man and true joined the majority, for we buried George Payne in the next grave to the Admiral. No cheerier or

more respected sportsman ever lived, and, though he was only a moderate hand at managing his own affairs (for he got through two or three fortunes), yet his opinion and advice were both highly valued and sought for, whenever a breach of the code of honour, or personal quarrels, required a master mind to settle a knotty point. Poor G. P. ! how I have enjoyed seeing him and the Admiral playing billiards, the running commentaries they indulged in on each other's play and peculiarities of conformation were too amusing, and I have laughed till my sides ached at those two old cronies trying to put each other off their play by various devices. When the old Admiral was getting the worst of the game, he invariably not only took off his coat and waistcoat, but uncoiled the long and stiff cravat which encircled his throat some three or four times, and, if matters didn't improve, his shirt-collar and one brace were wrenched off, and vigorously thrown on one side.

Yes! the "only Admiral," and G. P. were indeed a great loss to the Jockey Club and the Turf generally, and, personally, I don't ever expect to see their likes again.

CHAPTER IX.

Bipeds on Land and Water—Captain Webb—His Channel Swim—Wonderful Feats of Endurance—His Death by Drowning in Niagara Rapids—Bipeds on Land—E. P. Weston—His Match with Dan O'Leary—Weston Miscalculates his Hours—Short of Pluck—O'Leary Wins—I take the Royal Agricultural Hall, Islington, for a Six Days' "Go as You Please" Competition—Won by O'Leary with just over 520 Miles—Vaughan of Chester—Publish a Balance-sheet, for various Reasons—Corkey and his Wife—Eel-broth and Attention—A New Bonnet—Balance-sheet of Second Competition: Not quite so good a Result—Take a Fancy to Rowell's Style—Find the Money to send him to Compete at New York—I give him a Trial Spin at Elsham—Am Satisfied—Rowell brings back Championship Belt and close on £5000—Crosses Atlantic a Second Time with equal Success—Blower Brown—His Quaint old Backer, John Smith—Hot Bath and Chops win the Day—Divided Opinions amongst Good Men on Long Distance Competitions—My Club Friend—My Opinion carried out—So was he within Six Months.

Now, I think we must spin a yarn as to the progression of bipeds, both in water and on land. I am a very poor swimmer myself, and never was a very ardent admirer of bathing, either in fresh water—where one shares one's ablutions with rats, tadpoles, and every sort of live reptiles, as well as occasionally bumping against a putrefying dog or a strangled cat—or in the restless billows of the briny

ocean, where with moderate luck a bather from the shore or the luxurious machine, may in one or more consecutive gulps, run the gauntlet of dead fish of sorts and ages, decayed sea-weed, or the diseased jelly-fish. No! give me my tub, with pellucid water of the required temperature, and the comforts of my dressing-room around me—but I am getting a bit off the line.

Well, though I was not proficient at swimming, I always envied those that *were*, and in 1875 I made the acquaintance of Captain Webb, one of the gamest men I ever came across, and a veritable wonder in water. He had just succeeded in swimming from Dover to Calais, 35 miles, in 21 hrs. 45 mins., and he helped me to get up a sweepstakes for swimmers in the Thames. I collected some £50 from the Members of the House of Commons, which was laid out in medals, &c., as prizes for competition, the course being from Westminster to Putney Bridge, and *vice versa*. I think I managed three of these shows, and then they died out. I was a constant attendant at the Lambeth Baths in 1879, when in a sweepstakes for six days (fourteen hours a day) Webb won, swimming 74 miles in 84 hours. Again, in March, 1880, Webb swam for 60 hours at the Westminster Aquarium in salt water, and remained in the water, without a break,

for 38 hrs. 52 mins. 10 secs.; he rested 21 mins. 30 secs., then dived in again, and remained in the water until the call of time at the end of sixty hours. According to agreement he was entitled to $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours (in the aggregate) for rest, of which he only used twenty-one minutes and a half. He did this for a bet of £100 to £20, which was laid by me.

Poor Webb! he was very popular, and I recollect on one occasion when he was acting as judge at the Weston *v.* O'Leary match at the Agricultural Hall, what an ovation the crowd gave him when he spoke a few words at the end of the match. It is sad to think that within eight years of his grand performance across the Channel, when it verily seemed as if water could not drown him, he should lose his life in attempting the foolhardy feat of swimming the Whirlpool Rapids at Niagara Falls.

Now we will turn to the progression of bipeds on land. As I was useful myself, walking and trotting, I was always ready to encourage pedestrianism in all its forms, and during my Parliamentary career I became acquainted with E. P. Weston, a Yankee of extraordinary staying powers, and whose performances in his own country seemed to me marvellous. After witnessing some of his "wobbling"* feats over

* Weston's gait when walking was very peculiar, hardly fair heel-and-toe perhaps.

here, I offered to match him against any man breathing, to walk six days and nights for £500 a side. Dan O'Leary, of Chicago, took up the challenge, the Agricultural Hall at Islington was hired for the occasion, and the match came off there early in April, 1877. Now, Weston had made out to his own satisfaction that whoever did 506 miles in the 142 hours would be sure to win; so he wrote out an elaborate table of the number of miles he was to cover each twenty-four hours, and the amount of rest he could take in that time, and when O'Leary led him on the second day, Weston, instead of keeping near him, as he could have done, rested according to his table, feeling quite certain—as he told me—that his opponent would overdo himself and come back to him. But Dan O'Leary was the gamest of the game, and, though fearfully used up on the morning of the sixth day, he was some ten miles ahead of Weston, who had only to come on the track and put in a useful five or six miles, which he was quite capable of doing, and the match would have been his; but when I tried to get him out of bed he went soft, and on my telling him I should chuck some cold water over him, he burst out crying, and that settled the matter: for you can do nothing at any game with a party who pipes his eye. The end of it was that the game O'Leary

struggled on and covered 520 miles, beating Weston by ten miles.

I helped Dan off the track, to his four-wheel cab at the private exit, and he was that stiff he could not raise his foot to get into the cab; in fact, I lifted one foot and then the other the few inches required to land him in the conveyance. And when I got back into the Hall, there was my man running round the track, pushing the roller in front of him, and keeping time to the music of the band. Next day (Sunday) he was as fresh as a kitten, and came down to Lowndes Square just as I was going to morning church, and insisted on going with me, and, I can assure you, played a pretty knife and fork afterwards; whilst poor Daniel, the winner, was all wrong for some days after. Out of the 142 hours, O'Leary had only been off the track 26 hours, and Weston 28 hours. For that matter, I don't believe I had more than two or three hours' sleep myself in each twenty-four, for I never was more excited over any performance; and the number of cigars I got through was a record—not silly little female cigarettes either.

Well, I was so taken with the long-distance business that I decided to take the Hall and give some good prizes, open to all comers; but as the wobbling gait of Weston was open to objection as not being

fair heel-and-toe walking, I proposed that the competitors should "*go as they pleased.*" Accordingly, in good time, I advertised that I would give a champion belt, value £100, and £500 to the winner, £100 to the second, £50 to the third, and other prizes to those who succeeded in covering 450 miles, and on March 18th, 1878, about twenty started, amongst them O'Leary, and he just beat his previous performance of 520 miles, winning again by sheer gameness. At one time he was so dazed he could not see the edge of the track, until some fresh white sawdust was brought and laid round the near edge. On another occasion, I fancy he got hold of, or was given, a drop of good old port, which a fond parent of one of the competitors had brought up to stimulate his lad's exertions, and a strong pull at this red wine on an empty stomach made poor Dan's progress decidedly devious; but all in, he won—beating Vaughan of Chester twenty miles, and Blower Brown by forty-three, both good men. Vaughan was, perhaps, the finest walker I ever saw, but could not run a little bit. He was by trade a carpenter, at Chester, and a real clean-made and thoroughly respectable man. Blower Brown we shall hear of later. O'Leary took the belt to America, and declared he would not part with it, till some better man came and fetched it.

As some of the sporting scribes imputed all sorts of sordid motives to me, I had all the receipts and expenses verified, and published the following balance-sheet in the *Sporting Life*, which effectually silenced the carping critics for the time; for it dawned on them that a sporting "Bart." was a bit more liberal to the men of thews and sinews than the sporting "Bung" usually was:—

BALANCE-SHEET.

RECEIPTS.				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By "Gate" Monday	.	.	.	267	2	6			
„ Tuesday	.	.	.	276	11	0			
„ Wednesday	.	.	.	400	14	0			
„ Thursday	.	.	.	470	14	6			
„ Friday	.	.	.	641	13	6			
„ Saturday	.	.	.	832	1	6			
							2888	17	0
Entries	.	.	.	.	.	.	170	0	0
Total							3058	17	0
EXPENDITURE.				£	s.	d.			
Prizes to Winners and Attendants at Conclusion of Walk	.	.	.	989	10	0			
Belt and Medals	.	.	.	130	0	0			
Extra Money-Prizes	.	.	.	498	10	0			
Hire of Hall, Gas, Stands, Contractor's Work, &c.	.	.	.	455	3	4			
Gate-Keepers, Commissionaires, Police	.	.	.	120	9	0			
Judges and Scorers	.	.	.	192	0	0			
Band	.	.	.	78	0	0			
Printing, Advertising, &c.	.	.	.	137	3	6			
Lavatories, Messengers, Miscellaneous Sundries	.	.	.	56	3	6			
							2656	19	4
Balance at Banker's for Future Prizes	.	.	.	401	17	8			
Total							3058	17	0

I was glad to read in the *Chicago Tribune* of May 19th, 1878, that O'Leary, on being asked by a reporter, "Was there any trouble over the stake?" replied, "No, that was given up freely; let me say that Mr. Astley is a gentleman, and a lover of fair play."

In October, 1878, I got up another "go-as-you-please show," on much the same lines as before, and for about the same prizes. This time W. Gentleman (Corkey) won with 521 miles; B. Brown was second, 506 miles; and Rowell third, 470. The winner, Corkey, was a very quaint-looking little old chap, of forty-six; he had won a lot of running matches in his time, and had very peculiar high action. He didn't look a bit like staying, was as thin as a rail, and stuttered very funnily; but in Mrs. Corkey he possessed a real treasure. She never left him day or night, and was always ready to hand her sweetheart a basin of delicious and greasy eel-broth, that he loved so well, and which evidently agreed so famously with him. Towards the last, when it was evident Corkey could not be caught, I ordered a lovely suit for him to finish in, and bought Mrs. Corkey an out-and-out bonnet, slightly on the gaudy side; but I can tell you he and she were a striking couple when they did the last few laps arm in arm together, to the tune of the "Conquering

Hero." I will here put in one more balance-sheet, which shows the receipts were not quite so good, and the expenses were heavier; but the lighting of the hall and the accommodation for the competitors was superior.

BALANCE-SHEET.

RECEIPTS.										
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By "Gate" Monday	.	.	.	.	317	5	1			
„ Tuesday	.	.	.	.	275	14	6			
„ Wednesday	.	.	.	.	343	4	0			
„ Thursday	.	.	.	.	406	19	0			
„ Friday	.	.	.	.	674	10	6			
„ Saturday	.	.	.	.	829	5	10			
					2846	18	11			
Less Banker's Commission	.	.			2	12	6			
								2844	6	5
By Entries	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	211	0	0
„ Burt for "Right of Sale" of Programmes	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	31	0	0
„ Baker for Standing of Lung-Testing Machine.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	0	0
					Total	.	.	3088	6	5
EXPENDITURE.										
						£	s.	d.		
Prizes to Winners and Attendants at Conclusion of Walk						867	0	0		
Extra Money-Prizes	.	.	.	.	.	406	0	0		
Belt and Medals	.	.	.	.	.	130	0	0		
Hire of Hall	.	.	.	.	.	400	0	0		
Gas and Electric Light	.	.	.	.	.	125	16	0		
Contractor's Work for Track, Stands, &c.	.	.	.	.	.	109	2	0		
Accommodation for Men	.	.	.	.	.	40	15	2		
Gate-Keepers, Commissionaires, Police	.	.	.	.	.	133	3	0		
Judges, Scorers, Timekeepers	.	.	.	.	.	274	0	0		
Band	.	.	.	.	.	60	0	0		
Printing, Advertising, &c.	.	.	.	.	.	91	0	0		
Staff, Messengers, &c.	.	.	.	.	.	111	18	2		
						2748	14	4		
Balance towards Fund	.	.	.	.	.	339	12	1		
					Total	.	.	3088	6	5

The third man in the late competition, C. Rowell, took my fancy much, as he was a very clean-made, muscular young fellow, and had formerly been our boat boy at the Guards' Club at Maidenhead. He had since that time run long distances well, and was real fond of the business, though he had not made any great score. However, I fancied he could, if properly looked after; so I posted £100 for Rowell and entered him for a six days and nights' competition at Madison Square Gardens at New York; and I bid Rowell get himself fit, and I would pay expenses of himself and two friends (to look after him) in the land of Stars and Stripes. In due time he reported himself in proper fettle for the contest; so I wrote to him to come down to Elsham, and I would see him run four or five hours. He duly arrived, and the next morning, having measured off the requisite number of laps to the mile on the gravel walks in our kitchen-garden, I set him going, and told him to run at the rate of eight miles an hour till I bid him stop.

He ran the first sixteen miles with such ease in two hours that I went away, telling one of the gardeners to score up the laps with a bit of chalk on the garden-wall. In about an hour I returned, and he seemed going easier than when he started; so I let him continue another hour, and when he had covered

thirty-two miles—just under the four hours—he had not turned a hair. I stopped him and advised him to have a good rub down between the blankets; but he ran off to the stables, and stripping, got two of the helpers to chuck three or four buckets of the coldest spring water over him; he was then rubbed dry in the warm stables, put his things on, and asked me to let him go and shoot some rabbits, and away he went. I was satisfied that he was good enough to send over to try and bring back the champion belt to England, and I duly sent him and his two mates over to New York, lending him £250 to cover all expenses.

The match came off, March 10, 1879, and, sure enough, he won with a total of 500 miles; Ennis, 476, second; and Harriman, 450, third. Rowell brought back the belt, and with his prize and share of the gate-money he pocketed nearly £5000—a pretty good haul for a man who had seldom had two sovereigns to rub against each other. He paid me back my £250, and subsequently went over on his own hook, and was again successful in September, 1879, doing 530 miles—Merritt, 515, second; and Hazael, 500, third—landing quite ten thousand pounds over the two trips. It was touch-and-go with him the last day, for he had some poisonous stuff put into his

food or drink, and only just got over it in time to keep the rapidly diminishing lead he had gained on the third day. Rowell was a native of Chesterton, near Cambridge, and thought nothing of running up to London (some sixty miles) under the eight hours, and back again the next day.

It was wonderful what interest the public took in these long-distance performances; though in England the entrance was only a shilling, in New York, I believe, it was a dollar. Scores and hundreds of people came in just to have a peep, and were so fascinated that they stayed for hours, returning day after day. Amongst these were many refined men of letters, one of whom, a brilliant poet, confided to me one morning, in the small hours at the Agricultural Hall, that he had never been so interested in any show in his life. The money taken at the doors nearly always exceeded the prizes and expenses; so, after giving away more than I advertised, I put by the surplus for a prize fund for walking and running different distances, and distributed many watches and belts amongst the successful competitors.

My readers will be weary of any more of the "go-as-you-please" competitions, so I will only add that in April, 1879, Blower Brown won with 542 miles; Hazael second, 492; Corkey third, 473;

Weston, 450, fourth. In June, 1879, Weston won with 550 miles, Brown being second with 453. February, 1880, Brown won with 553; Hazael second, 480; and Day third, 456. At New York, February, 1882, Hazael won with 600 miles; Fitzgerald second, 577; Noremac third, 555; and it is reported that in December, 1888, G. Littlewood did $623\frac{3}{4}$ miles, but I have never felt quite satisfied as to the correctness of the scoring, though I know he was a very smart young chap, and perhaps the prettiest runner of the lot. And now farewell to the progression of bipeds during the six days and nights' "go-as-you-please" shows at merry Islington and New York; but I must say a word about that peculiar brick-maker, Blower Brown, and his backer, one of the quaintest of old peds, John Smith, whose *soubriquet* when in his prime was the "Regent Street Pet."

Brown had early distinguished himself by the rapid manner he trundled his barrow of bricks to the kiln, and back again for another load, and, like all brick-makers (I have ever heard of), he was wonderfully fond of beer: therefore, when old Jack Smith wished to get an extra spurt out of his *protégé*, he used to yell at him on the track, and the same exhortation and promise was enumerated whenever his instinct told him encouragement was

needed: "Well done, Blower! go it, Blower! you have got 'em all beat, my beauty! Yes! Blower shall have a barrel of beer all to himself if he wins; go it, Blower!" One day Blower showed signs of shutting up, and as he was more an animal than an angel, Smith and I agreed that it would be a good thing to wake him up a bit by putting him in a hot bath—quite a new sensation for him—so we took him to my lodgings hard by, and I ordered two chops to be got ready for him, and then put him into a hip bath of *real hot* water, which livened him up considerably, fairly making him sing out. When we had got him nicely dried, the chops appeared, and whilst I was helping Blower into his running-suit I was horrified to observe old Smith busily employed gobbling up all the best parts of the chops, leaving only the bone, gristle, and fat, and when I expostulated with him on his greediness and cruelty to his man, he replied: "Bless yer, Colonel! Blower has never had the chance of eating the inside, he likes the outside," and, sure enough, the brick-maker cleaned up the dish, with the result that he won first prize, doing 542 miles, a grand performance, and, what is more, his appetite and thirst were in no way impaired.

One word *re* the utility or otherwise of these feats of endurance. My opinion is, first, that any

means by which an honest penny is to be acquired by those who need it ought to be encouraged ; secondly, that it is good for man to know how short a time for sleep or rest in the twenty-four hours is really essential to sustain the physical powers of his body ; thirdly, that it is quite as good for man to know what distance the human species are capable of covering between two Sundays, as it is for him to blindly believe that the sun is two million miles, one lap, four yards, three feet, and two inches from the earth. To sum up : the experiences of a 142 hours' trudge, inculcates the necessity of a man refraining from over-indulgence in the pleasures of the world, the flesh, or the devil.

Good men and true differ in their opinions on long-distance contests, some insisting that their tendency is demoralising, others that they tend to a *mens sana in corpore sano*. During the evenings and nights, heaps of my friends used to come up to the Hall ; amongst the most constant were the Duke of Hamilton, the late General Goodlake, and a host of others. My brothers, Hugh and Spencer, were also very much interested in the undertaking. It is curious how these competitions have died out, but perhaps it is that there are very few gentlemen who would care to incur the risk and trouble such

shows necessitate. All I can say is, I never knew of any man injuring his physique or constitution by a six days' tramp, and I have always thought that I was badly treated by one good old gentleman at my club, who pathetically besought me one day to abandon a competition that I was just starting; saying: "My dear Sir John, I feel sure you will be some day tried for manslaughter, when one of your competitors dies on the track." I replied, "Worthy sir, I will bet you "fifty," and leave it to our heirs and assigns to determine, that you die from want of exercise before any one of the competitors dies from taking too much"; but, will you believe it? he would not book the bet, and quietly slipped into his grave (being short of exercise) some six months afterwards.

CHAPTER X.

Many Irons in the Fire between 1870 and 1880—Purchase Orleans House and Grounds adjoining—Form a Club—Six Hundred Members to Start with—Weather a Serious Consideration with a Club of this kind—Lose Money in the Concern—Entertain Australians after Cricket—Obliged to Sell the Place in 1882—The Filter Gentleman—My Cabs and Horses—Bad Luck at last—Horse Bolts and Meets with a Soda-Water Van—Driver Injured—Hospital—Uncle Appears—A Cunning Old File—Defend the Case in Person—Waddy, Q.C.—Notwithstanding my Eloquence am cast for £125 Compensation—Take to Chance Locomotion at Ordinary Rates per Time or Distance—The Story of Nougat.

PERHAPS some of my readers may think that I had a fair lot of irons in the fire between 1870 and 1880, but I had plenty of “go” in me then, and so ought every man till he is well over fifty. In addition to racing, coursing, shooting, athletic competitions, managing two estates (one under the strict rules of the Court of Chancery), Jockey Club steward’s work, a breeding stud, a string of racehorses, a home farm, magistrate’s work, Parliamentary work, looking after a wife and seven children, a house in town and one at Newmarket, and a couple of hansom cabs, in March, 1877, I went in for a “spec.,” and bought

Orleans House and Mount Lebanon, with the grounds, comprising forty-two acres, of the Duke D'Aumale for £45,000 as it stood, paying a *douceur* of four thousand to some parties who had the right of pre-emption. I subsequently sold Mount Lebanon and eleven acres to Mr. W. Cunard for £11,000. Then I set to work to furnish Orleans House throughout as a luxurious social club, and employed a City firm for that purpose. In addition, I went down to a sale at Kernsey Abbey, near Dover, where I laid out judiciously about a thousand pounds in brand new furniture, some of which had not even been unpacked, as its purchaser had died suddenly. One item, perhaps an extravagant one, was a beautiful billiard-table and fittings, for which I gave three hundred. The richly carved legs ran up the price; now, being more careful, I am not sure that plain legs would not have done as well.

I soon whipped up some six hundred members at five guineas subscription and ten guineas entrance; but, alas! I was not long in discovering that the success of a club in the country as a speculation, depends entirely on the weather. Could I have insured a sunny dry summer like that of 1893, a profit might be made, but in wet or even uncertain weather, but few people care to come down either by rail or road. In 1878 I raised the

subscription to ten guineas, which most of my members cheerfully paid; but I still lost money. However, like a soldier, I struggled on gamely till the end of the season 1882, when I was glad to sell the property to Mr. Cunard for £33,000, losing, therefore, some five thousand on the deal, let alone "*exes*" out of pocket, which were considerable. Had I only put half the money into Kempton Park, which started about the same time as my club, I should have made a real good hit; but my trustees would not hear of that as an investment for trust-money.

Orleans was a charming place, and I flatter myself I had greatly improved the grounds when I sold it. I had made a very fair cricket-ground on a small scale, and in July, 1878, I got the Australians to come there and play a two days' match against the Orleans Eleven, as got together by C. Thornton ("Bun," I mean). The *fête* was a great success, and I believe the Colonials were much pleased at the reception the club gave them. I took the chair at the dinner after the first day's play, and both elevens had a high old time, fraternising extraordinary over the flowing bowl. The large picture-gallery with its oak parquet floor made a first-class ball-room, and I gave a fancy dress ball there one evening, when Royalty honoured the club with its

presence. It being a lovely still night, the pretty lawn and extensive shrubberies looked quite charming when they were lit up by the lime light and thousands of lamps. The river was also a great attraction, as I had a steam-launch and plenty of boats always in readiness.

It was at this club that I first discovered what an extraordinary profit could be made on aërated waters, which were to be bought wholesale at three-halfpence or twopence a bottle, and sold retail at sixpence. Under these circumstances my readers will thoroughly appreciate what a nasty jar I received one morning, when, as I was standing on the steps at the front door, a stranger walked up the drive with a large brown paper parcel under his arm. I asked him what he wanted. He said he had come to see Sir John. I replied that what was left of Sir John was before him, and what was he carrying under his arm? To my horror and indignation he produced a huge filter of the most approved principle, and was about to dilate on its merits when I shut him up sharp, pointing out to him that every one in the establishment had strict orders to warn thirsty souls against drinking the local water, and that, therefore, by no manner of means could I encourage the purifying qualities of his invention, which simply meant rapid ruin to the

proprietor of the club. I, furthermore, curtly told him to retrace his steps as quickly as he could, and never come near Orleans again ; but, to show that there was no bad feeling, I told him he could name his liquor up to sixpennyworth, and the poor inventor retired terribly crestfallen.

I had reserved for myself a very pleasant room looking over the lawn and river, and often, after the long and tedious sittings in the House of Commons, I used to drive down in my buggy behind an old Russian trotter, in the small hours, to Orleans, and was not unfrequently lulled to sleep by the rippling song of the nightingales, who never deserted the shrubberies. No greater contrast can well be imagined than the peaceful slumber induced by these delicious surroundings, to the wretched and neck-breaking efforts to snatch repose in some nook of the lobbies of Westminster, where your nap was abruptly ended by the tinkling of the division bell, or the strident screech of some Irish owl. Lots of my old members still recall with pleasure the jolly time they spent at Orleans, and heartily regret its collapse—so do I.

I mentioned that I owned two cabs, and I never knew what pleasant locomotion in London was, till I bought of Captain Wombwell his private hansom cab and a smart quick-stepping black horse, also

engaging his coachman, W. Rump, to drive me. However, I soon found that, as I was so much out of London I must have another hansom with a number on it, to earn something while I was away. So I bought another cab, and had Asteroidal, a five-year-old racehorse, that I had originally bought for three hundred to lead Scamp in his work, broken to harness. He had sprung the sinews of both fore-legs, and I had had him fired, and though I believe he could not have carried a six stone boy ; yet, with the weight off his back, no better cabhorse ever went on the stones ; he could take me down to Orleans Club and back in real good time, and with very little trouble to himself. My third cab-horse was a pretty little thoroughbred chestnut mare I spotted one day running in a hansom on my way to the station. I told Rump to find out all about her, and next day I bought her for forty guineas. With these three nags I could work both cabs well, and my riding cost me comparatively little. I gave Rump twenty-five shillings a week standing wages, and he paid me ten shillings a day when he plied for hire and I didn't use the cab ; so he made a bit, and I rode comfortably and speedily at a small cost.

At last there came a day of ill luck, for having brought up an old hunter from home called Hook

and Eye, which I had bought some years before from the old Lord Vivian, I handed him over to the cabwork, and one morning when his driver had to get off the box to call for his money at the Bachelors' Club, the old horse became frightened at some building operations going on over his head, got loose from the commissionaire, who was minding him, and galloped up Park Lane, and, as bad luck would have it! the cab wheel collided with a soda-water van, the jerk pitched the driver off his perch on to the pavement, and he was conveyed insensible to St. George's Hospital, where I went to see that he had every comfort. He soon got over the concussion of the brain and returned to his lodgings, and both could, and would, have resumed his van-driving; but he had an old uncle—quite the lawyer—who persuaded him to get a tidy bit out of the Bart., before he went to work.

One fine morning the uncle came to me in Lowndes Square, and, after a long jaw, I told him I would give his nephew fifty pounds compensation and no more (plenty too); but the old one said he would have five hundred, or go to law for it. So into court we went, and I defended my own case. Mr. Waddy, Q.C. (now M.P. for our Brigg Division of Lincolnshire, worse luck!) prosecuted. I believe the fifty pounds I paid into court would have

sufficed ; but, unfortunately, the case before ours was, curiously enough, also one of accident. The tap of the Waterworks Company's main was some inches higher than the rest of the roadway, and an elderly party had been pitched out of his carriage by the fall of his horse, which had stumbled over the obstacle, the jury awarding £125 damages against the Water Company. Well, this was the last act of that jury, and the new jury were waiting in court to be sworn in, and when our case came on, these twelve talented men were convinced that culpable negligence on the part of my cabman was the cause of the van-driver's accident, and they paid no attention to the fact that my cabhorse was in charge of a commissionaire ; at any rate as in the last case they had heard that £125 was awarded to the injured party, they followed suit, and I was cast for £125, too ; so that made my riding come rather expensive that year.

There was a good bit of fun in court during the case, and old *Twaddy* was quite on the spot when he appealed to the judge to curb my peculiar style of examining and cross-examining the witnesses ; for, said he, "I am sure your Lordship will have observed that the worthy Baronet has exceeded the rules of this court, and I venture to think he is trying to introduce the 'go-as-you-please' principle,

as he so successfully did in the Agricultural Hall"—a smart sally which livened up everybody, from the judge to the plaintiff. I had to pay and look pleasant, and not long after, as times got worse and worse with me, I had to sell the whole bag of tricks, cabs, horses, and harness; but got the nags and cabby good places. After this I had to chance my locomotion, paying the usual rates per mile or hour.

I will conclude this somewhat short chapter with the story of an animal called Nougat, which I bought in 1874; and I ought to have related it among the events of that year, but, no doubt, it will do very well in its present position, and is, I think, worth telling.

THE STORY OF NOUGAT.

It was during Windsor Summer races, 1874, I was looking on at a selling-race, and my attention was attracted to the peculiar manner one of the jockeys was riding his horse; it was a two-year-old, bred in France, called Nougat. H. Chaplin was also struck with the same idea, and straightway I got a friend to claim Nougat for me; at the same time, H. C. bought the winner, Carlos, 3 yrs., at auction after the race, and both were entered in a selling-race closing that night, so that we might have a public trial and make sure as to our suspicions. I

had no horse at the meeting, nor was my trainer there ; but, seeing old Drewitt on the course, I asked him to take charge of Nougat for me, telling him to be careful no one could tamper with the horse during the night, as there would sure to be an inquiry into the running of the horse on the morrow. Good old Drewitt was quite proud of the confidence reposed in him, and, getting a lad to lead the two-year-old, he strutted away behind him, looking very consequential, while his good-natured phiz wore an expression of dire determination.

He told me that he had one of his own padlocks with him that no living man could open, and away I went up to London ; but came down in good time the next morning, and drove to the Swan Inn at Clewer, where I found Drewitt brimful of importance. He told me that there had been much talk about the race of yesterday. We went to the stables in the rear of the inn, and Drewitt, producing a key from his pocket, proceeded to unlock a massive brass padlock. There, sure enough, in the box was Nougat. Drewitt proudly declared that he had seen the horse done up, had fed and watered him himself, and had taken every precaution possible that no stranger could get to the horse. Whilst he was talking, I observed that the partition between

this box and the next was only carried up to the height of the wall, and, there being no ceiling, any one could climb over from one box into the other. I pointed this out to the sapient one, but he was still positive that all was right, admitting, however, that a horse from the same Epsom stable stood in the next box. Nougat looked a bit dull, and Drewitt said he would walk up to the paddock with him before the first race. So he did. When I got to the paddock I was struck with the peculiar way Nougat carried his head (as if it was too heavy for him), almost between his knees, and as I was told that when all right he was a corky, light-hearted horse, I made up my mind some interested party had given the poor beast some strong sedative, and did not back him for a bob.

Well! neither Carlos nor Nougat were in the first three in the race; but, dead amiss as he undoubtedly was, Nougat finished in front of Carlos (both being ridden out) some distance. These facts were laid before the stewards of the Jockey Club, and after inquiry the jockey was suspended for two years. Nougat was very queer for some time, and it was not till the Houghton Meeting I could run him, when, finding he could stay, I had a bit on him for the Feather Plate, at 8 to 1, and he won anyhow, by twelve lengths. But I lost him, for

Jennings had orders to buy him for Count Le-grange, as he could run in France; so I let him go at 700 guineas. He won several good races in France, and has been a fairly successful sire. I never heard of his conqueror, Carlos, any more.

I again won the Feather Plate in 1878, with a two-year-old, Chocolate by Mogador, and had a good race on her, as she pleased me much in a long gallop with some old horses. She won again at Shrewsbury, and R. Peck bought her for 530 guineas; but she never won another race. No better race to gamble on than the Feather Plate if you can light on a two-year-old that can stay, and is not too headstrong for a little lad to ride the long two miles.

CHAPTER XI.

Racing in 1875—Scamp, 4 Years—The Whip at Newmarket—Duke of Parma, 3 Years—The Trial—Ask Sir Charles Russell—Buy Hopbloom, 2 Years—Chirk Castle—Dicky Biddulph and his Wife—Scamp Improves—Machell and Match-making—Pop *v.* Claret—Pop walks in—Thanks to Archer, Brigg Boy gets Home First—Caledon Alexander beats me with Nina, 2 Years—Curious In-and-out Running at Doncaster—Hopbloom wins Hunt Cup at Ascot—A Nice Price—Runs Second to Rosebery for Cambridgeshire—Send Scamp and Bridget to Epsom—Fogo Rowlands and Pitt Place—Marcus Beresford—The Sadleirs—Reggy Herbert—Jack Jones, Trainer and Jockey—A Split in the Stable—Fogo nearly Bungles with Scamp—Peter Crawshaw—The Big Hurdle-race—Scamp wins easy—Never took to Jumping—Send him to the Stud—Jimmy Adams—His Retort to me—I get the Worst of it.

WE must now return to the racecourse and my luck thereon. I left off about 1874, after Scamp had won the Goodwood Stakes, &c. In 1875 Scamp, 4 yrs., walked over for the Whip at Newmarket, a curious old trophy, which I held unchallenged for two or three seasons. For the Cesarewitch of this year I backed Scamp for a lot of money, but I was a fool to do it, as it turned out, for we had the winner in Blanton's stable, though I must confess I

never dreamed of the Duke of Parma, 3 yrs., being dangerous; no more I believe did Blanton, or his owner, good old Soltykoff, until one day the young one astonished us all by the way he pulled over the older horses in a rough gallop. In consequence, it was arranged that he should have a rough-up on the Saturday before the Cesarewitch with poor A. C. Barclay's five-year-old horse Bertram, two miles.

It was a foul morning, for it rained and blew *tremendous*; however, I mounted my cob, and the two horses were started, with another to make the running at Choke Jade, and they came right round by the tan-side at a rare good pace; but, in spite of the blinding storm, I could see, some distance off, that the young one with the four white legs had a lot the best of it, and the Duke romped home the easiest of winners. Therefore at 5 st. 7 lbs., he looked like "a moral" for the big race, if only a small boy could ride him. (I wonder if Sir Charles Russell thought so, too? You might ask him.) The commission already arranged for was executed that afternoon, and I had £1200 to 100 in it; so I saved my outlay on Scamp, who ran moderately. I was only a bare winner, notwithstanding, and all the stable were reckoned real flats for not discovering the "nugget" till so near the day.

Lady of the Lake, 4 yrs., by Broomielaw out of Lady Hungerford, won me three races this year, and took to jumping very kindly in the autumn, winning me a hurdle-race at Lincoln Spring, and would have won the following day but, in landing over the last hurdle but one, she split one of her fore pasterns all to pieces. At Shrewsbury Autumn of 1875 I had the good luck to buy Hopbloom, 2 yrs., by Parmesan out of Cognisaunce, after he had won a small selling-race, for 340 guineas. His trainer, Stevens, was sorry to part with him, and pointed out to me that he had cut himself inside the hock on the seat of spavin ; but I told him that was the result of the deep ground and the horse not being up to the mark, and that we would try and make an alteration by the following spring ; so he didn't get Hopbloom back !

I was staying at Chirk Castle that meeting with my good friend, R. Biddulph, who then had a horse or two in training, and went well to hounds. What a lovely place is Chirk !—the undulation of the ground, the splendid timber, the massive and grand old castle enclosing its spacious quadrangle yard, is a combination you rarely meet with, in a picturesque sense ; while the comfortable interior of the structure, the *À la cuisine*, and the incomparable “pop,” together with the fair form of the hostess, and hearty welcome with which she and her “hubby”

always greet their friends, produce a *tout ensemble* not to be beat. Please to mind that I ain't guessing, for I and my better-half have paid many visits to good old Chirk, and all the harm I wish Dick and his good lady is, that their granite boulders may turn into "nuggets," for I know of no couple that would make better use of a thousand a week. But, hie! How about Hopbloom?

Well, the next morning I took "Marky Beresford"—who was also staying at Chirk—to cast his eye over my new purchase, in a wretched box at the Raven Hotel, and that extra good judge of the equine species evidently pitied his elderly pal for so rashly purchasing such a long-haired rat. But it did me good to note his look of surprise when, the following Spring, I asked him if he recognised a lovely round and shapely three-year-old (with a coat like satin) in Blanton's stable. When I told him it was the Shrewsbury donkey that he had so despised last November, he cordially agreed with me that he was quite a dear, and yet not *too* dear at 340 guineas. This year, one of my own breeding, Brigg Boy, 2 yrs., a very pretty little brown colt by Broomielaw out of Vigorous by Vedette, won me a race at Epsom Summer, and a match at Newmarket, beating poor "Duppy's"*

* The late Lord Dupplin.

Kaleidoscope at 8 st. 10 lbs. each, when Fordham did the trick. He also won a Nursery at Newmarket First October, and another at Lincoln Autumn, when most of the Briggites (my neighbours) were well "on" their Boy. Poor little horse, he was unlucky in 1876, as he ran second to Controversy, 5 yrs., for the Lincoln Handicap. Had he won, I should have landed a nice stake. He won a race at Newmarket Craven Meeting on the Tuesday.

That night I dined with Captain Machell and Fred Calthorpe, and that's the only time that I know for certain I put away two bottles of superior "chammy," because the other two drank claret. The result of this extra dose of "pop" did me more good than harm, and that I can prove this way. Machell, knowing I was fond of a match, suggested that he would run Oxonian, aged, against Brigg Boy, 3 yrs., one mile. It was a queer match to make, as the old horse was past his best, and a straight mile at Newmarket was too far for my little horse. However, I agreed that we should run the Ditch Mile at even weights, for £200, on the Thursday, and that didn't take very long arranging; but the weights the horses were to carry took a lot of settling. Machell would insist on eight stone—giving as his reason that he wanted Archer to ride Oxonian—and at last I gave way,

and the match was duly drawn out, signed, and sent to Weatherby's.

We parted the best of friends, but as I strolled home I bethought me it would be judicious to secure Archer to ride mine (as Fordham was unwell and not riding). So next morning I stowed away my rasher of bacon and drop of tea a bit earlier than usual, and set my cob and cigar going up the Bury Hill. I soon found Archer, whom I thus accosted: "You ain't beholden to Captain Machell, are you?" "No," said he. "Right," said I, "you would as soon ride for me as for him?" "Every bit, Sir John." "Right you are then," said I; "I made a match last night, and I want you to ride Brigg Boy for me to-morrow, eight stone." "With pleasure," said he, "and what's the other horse?" "Old Oxonian, even weights, Ditch mile." "Oh, dear!" he said, "I'm afraid he will beat you, for I know the old horse is very well just now." "Never mind! I may depend on you to ride mine?" "Quite right, Sir John," and so we separated. Some hour or two afterwards the Captain appeared on his pony, and asked Archer to ride Oxonian. "Very sorry, Captain, but I have promised to ride Brigg Boy for Sir John." What passed I don't know, and perhaps if I did I shouldn't write it down, but whilst I was betting on

some race that afternoon at the stand, Machell came up to me, and said : " You're a pretty fellow ! " " Right ! " said I ; " I thought so when I looked in the glass this morning ; and what good ' pop ' that was you gave me last night ! " " Yes, but you have done me out of Archer, and you know I insisted on eight stone so that I could have him to ride mine." I replied, " I have a vivid recollection of all that passed last night, and undoubtedly you were keen to have Archer ; but I had a fancy that way, too, and I have got him—so it's odds on ' pop ' against claret for early rising, ain't it, if you only get it good and take enough of it ? " And lucky it was I had got Archer, for after a tremendous race he just got Brigg Boy home a short neck in front of T. Chaloner on Oxonian.

That was the last time Brigg Boy won for me ; he was beaten in a match with Caledon Alexander's Nina, 2 years, when it was thought such a *cert.* that 5 to 2 was laid on the Boy. To show how peculiar the running of horses is at times, and how careful we should be not to blame owners, trainers, or riders without really knowing something, I will tell you what happened at Doncaster this year. The Duke of Hamilton owned Lollypop, 3 yrs., and he and Brigg Boy ran in the Portland Plate at Doncaster on the Thursday, at even weights,

7 st. 6 lbs. each; Huxtable rode the Duke's, and Ros-siter rode mine. After a severe race Lollypop won, beating Brigg Boy by a neck. Next day the two horses met again—same course, same riders—but Lollypop carried ten pounds extra for winning, therefore Brigg Boy had ten pounds the best of the weights. He started at 7 to 4, and Lolly at 10 to 1; but Lollypop won, a length and a half, the Boy being second. Now, the real sharp's idea, I suppose, would be that I went for the Duke the second day; but he would not have thought so if he had glanced at my book, for I thought the safest horse in the race was Lollypop, and bet according.

The Boy's last race for me was at Lincoln Autumn, when C. Morbey (now the king of Soham and perhaps the luckiest and most intelligent owner of 1893) rode him, and the event looked a dead snip; but at the distance the saddle turned round, and Morbey finished on his bare back; so that good thing didn't come off, and I sold my little horse to Lord Rosebery for a thousand.

This year, 1876, Hopbloom, 3 yrs., won me a little handicap at the Craven Meeting. He was then trained for the Ascot Stakes, where I ran him and backed him freely; but he and three others ran out at the top turn near the stables, and my Bloom went end over end into the blooming gorse and

heather. When I went to stables in the evening at the Ascot Hotel, Blanton was all for sending him home; but I told him I had had a bad race, and that the horse had a chance in the Hunt Cup, so that I should run him the next day; as it turned out I was right, for he won cleverly, and at a nice price. I had taken 1000 to 30 five times and had shut up my volume, when a good little bookie from Nottingham came right across the ring, and dared me to take forty ponies, a pretty bet which I could not turn away. Little Hopkins rode a good race, and luckily neither he nor the horse were the worse for their tumble the day before.

I kept Hopbloom for the Autumn Handicaps, and thought he was good enough to win the Cesarewitch at 6 st. 12 lbs., but poor Rossiter rode his head off. I particularly impressed upon him not to come to the front till he got to the Bushes, but in the Bird Cage, after the race, little Charles Rayner ("The Weasel") confidentially informed me, that Hopbloom would win the Cambridgeshire; for, said he, I was on my hack at the corner of the Ditch, and your horse was leading the lot four lengths (so much for my orders to Rossiter!). It is a matter of history now, that Rosebery won both the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire that season, but my horse was only beaten a neck for the Cam-

bridgeshire. I was riding my hack on the top side of the course whilst the race was being run, and galloped parallel with the running horses from the Red Post, holloaing like a madman "Go it, Hopkins! well done, Hopkins!" (same boy that won on him at Ascot), and from where I was—behind the horses—I really thought I had won; but no such luck! I was second, beaten a neck—nice price it was too, 40 to 1. We had two better favourites in the stable, but I should have landed a pot. Rosebery was a good horse that day, and his party landed a lot of money. I sold Hopbloom to the Duke of Montrose for two thousand, and he won him some races, and a good job too, for "Ronnie" Montrose was, and is, as good a sort as they make 'em, and so is the Duchess (I don't mean his mother).

Now I must return to the doings of Scamp. This year he never won a single race; so I sent him and Bridget, by Hermit out of Bertha—whom I had bought after winning a selling-race at Newmarket July the year before, when a two-year-old, for 440 guineas—to Epsom. Bridget had won for me this year the Trial Stakes at Epsom Spring, and a little handicap at Lincoln Autumn, and another at Shrewsbury. Well, I sent these two sound, likely nags to Fothergill Rowlands' training stables at Pitt Place, Epsom, to be taught jumping. I had known

"Fogo" Rowlands for some years, and no more amusing companion or loyal friend need one wish for; and I don't know a better exhibition of pluck than he showed, when suffering from gout in both feet and knees, he insisted on being lifted on to his horse's back sooner than pay forfeit on one occasion. It was when he rode his horse, The Guide, 14 st., against the Duke of Hamilton's Vet, 15 st., owners up, 2 miles, in March, 1867, at Warwick, and won anyhow. He was also a fine rider between the flags, and had once possessed a beautiful mare, Medora, on whom he had won some good races, notably one at Cheltenham, carrying 12 st. 7 lbs. She was indeed an extraordinary animal, for the week she was fifteen years old she won three steeple-chases, and when she retired to the stud she was the dam of several youngsters, though none, perhaps, of any great repute. "Fogo" had some five-and-twenty horses or so at Epsom, and poor Jack Jones—now dead—was his principal jockey. I used to go down to Epsom frequently, to see the horses being schooled over fences, and many a cheery day and evening have I enjoyed at Pitt Place. Marky Beresford, Dick Thorold and Reggy Herbert were, amongst other pals, often there, and Mrs. Rowlands (bless her! she is well and hearty still, and has sent me this very Christmas

—1893—a card, with forget-me-nots and tender wishes for my future emblazoned thereon) was a real kind hostess, and took immense interest in the stables. And so did a very pretty woman, Mrs. Sadleir, who, with her husband the Captain, a very good sort, used to live a good deal with the Rowlands, and few women could sing more charmingly than Mrs. S., so you may judge that the attractions at Pitt Place were a bit mixed, and not entirely given up to the equine species. Well! I mean they must be shut up in darkness to take their rest, long before their owners or trainers are put to bed, and so it happened not unfrequently that I and others stopped to dinner and a game of billiards, and—what I liked best—some singing in the drawing-room.

Scamp and Bridget both took kindly to hurdle-jumping, though Scamp, rather too often for safety, would knock his hurdles down. In the early Spring of 1877 “Fogo” wrote me I must come and see my two horses have a stripped gallop over hurdles on the Croydon racecourse; and so to Epsom I repaired, and next morning in good time we drove over to Croydon. Jim Adams (brother to Fred, who was head lad at Pitt Place, and cousin to Sam, who won many races for W. Day’s stable) rode Scamp, and Peter Crawshaw

(good little Peter! no better or pluckier gentleman jock than he!) rode Bridget, and we had a useful animal to make running. After a well run, and apparently true, trial, Scamp won nice and comfortable. "Fogo" was delighted, and no error, and declared he was sure to win the big hurdle-race in March.

Now, during the winter months, Marky Beresford had set up a separate training establishment at Epsom, and taken Jack Jones as his trainer and jockey; so, though "Marky" and "Fogo" continued friends, there was a slight soreness in old "Fogo's" breast, which made him all the keener to beat the seceders from his stable, in the Croydon Hurdle-race. I must tell you that Colonel A. Paget and "Duppy" had some jumpers with "Marky," and amongst them a very promising tit named Woodcock, also engaged in the big race at Croydon. The rival stables were both equally confident they had the winner. Well, I ran Bridget in the Wickham Hurdle-race at Croydon in February, and she won so easily that, with luck, Scamp's chance for the big race looked wonderful rosy; but the Epsom people didn't fancy him nearly so much as Woodcock, for my horse certainly did jump his hurdles in a slovenly fashion at times. However, as his speed had been good

enough to win several tidy races on the flat, it was curious the talent didn't fancy him more than they did. I well recollect, and cannot help laughing heartily now, at dear old "Fogo's" reception of me a few days before the big race came off. As I entered the front door he met me, and in his eager, sharp manner, exclaimed: "John, how dare they lay 10 to 1 against my horse! how dare they, John? Why, it's 10 to 1 *on* him!—put me 200 on him, John."

Now, it so happened that both "Fogo" and I were wonderful short, and though my credit was very good, yet I could ill afford to lose much money at this critical time of year; so I chided "Fogo" for his rashness, but declared him on 1200 to 100 with me, and vulgarly hinted that if the good thing didn't come off, the century must be at "Tatt.'s" on the Monday after the race. But he would not hear of defeat, and didn't care a rush for the Monday. The day before the race I got the following telegram from him, which I have had framed: "Finished his work rare and well. I fear nothing." Poor old boy! he was so excited that he forgot my oft-repeated instructions, that if he took Scamp by rail to Croydon he must mind and take the partitions out of the box; for, though he was the most docile and good-tempered of

horses, Scamp could not bear being cramped, or feeling anything beside him. The consequence was that, when we got down to the course on March 6th, the first news I heard was that Scamp had injured himself so much in the train that he would not be able to run. However, his hurts were exaggerated; but it had been a near thing, for, feeling a bit too much penned in, the horse let drive and kicked a hole right through the side of the box, and had cut his hock badly.

Well, the wife and I and a couple of pals had posted down in one of Newman's equipages with a pair of greys, and so had the Woodcock party, and we both placed our carriages on the top of the hill, from whence we could see every yard of the race, while the Pitt Place carriage—full of ladies—with my colours (straw and green cap) very much *en évidence*, was there too. Oh dear! what fun it was! Not half a bad day, and plenty of lunch handy. My confidence was materially increased when I got the card and read with delight that Scamp was number 7, and as his weight was 11 st. 11 lbs., I sung out 7's the main and 11's the nick,* and put a bit more on at 8 to 1 for luck. Old "Fogo" was somewhat *piano*, as he had been busy

* For the sake of the uninitiated, it is as well to explain, that eleven is the nick (as it is called) of seven, at the game of Hazard.

fomenting Scamp's hock, and feeling acutely that if by any possibility the horse didn't win he would be blamed for his carelessness; however, Jim Adams was confident, and in the canter past when it was seen that the injury didn't affect his action "Fogo," with the aid of an extra glass of "pop," recovered his defiant mien, and called every bookie a fool that offered to lay, and every backer an idiot that didn't fancy his certain winner.

I told Jim Adams to lay away, and let the other horses knock down the hurdles for Scamp, but to come hard all up the hill and chance the last hurdle. He rode a beautiful race, and though my heart was in my mouth at the last hurdle, no sooner was he over than Scamp sailed away and won eight lengths. It was lovely! I never enjoyed a win so much, and never shall again—not a drawback, and all my pals on to a man, even the opposition stable—whose Woodcock ran third—saved their money on mine, and plenty of chaff and "pop," you may be sure was flying about. I won about £5000 clear, after handing "Fogo" his twelve hundred, and giving the brothers Adams two hundred each (in those days considered quite a handsome present for head lad and jockey), and never did money come in more handy, for I was freezing hard up. Good old Scamp! he only won.

one more race for me—the Midland Handicap, at Warwick Autumn ; curiously enough, he did not improve in his jumping, and didn't like the game a little bit. I sent him to Arthur Yates at Alresford, but he got light on his work, and I had him home, where he sired some real good hunters, and the wife rides one now by Scamp out of Bridget. As these two had kept company so long, I thought in all decency they ought to be married !

When I sold my horses, Scamp was bought by an Australian ; but he died of inflammation soon after landing in the Antipodes. I felt a brute for parting with my pet, but creditors were real greedy. Bridget won a race for me at Lincoln Spring, appropriately named the Elsham Hurdle-race. She won nothing afterwards, and I had her home and put her to the stud. I must give Jimmy Adams a word of praise for the way he rode these two winners for me : a fine horseman and a cheery jock, nearly always laying odds on himself in his own mind against the best of them, and real fond of the game, may his shadow never be less ! Not that I have any fear on that point, for very nearly the last time he rode, as he was going out of the gate at Kempton Park, the profile of his figure struck me as so peculiar for a steeplechase rider, that I felt constrained to do the civil ; so I asked him if I

should take care of his "tummy" till he came back again. Touching his cap he courteously replied, "Much obliged, Sir John, but I think you have got plenty to do to take care of your own." (N.B. I was then from two to three stone heavier and fatter than I am now.) It was ready of him, and much to the point, wasn't it? Good Jimmy, I hope he will long live to lead in many winners of his own training and owning, and am glad to read of his son and heir distinguishing himself in the saddle.

CHAPTER XII.

Stirling Crawford—Sefton's Derby—A Moderate Horse—Buy Drumhead—Brogden the Jockey—The Bloater in Trouble—Gretton and Isonomy—He Wins the Cambridgeshire—Mr. Robins and Mr. Lorillard—The Newmarket Handicap—Parole—The Yankee Wins—Iroquois—A Cast-iron Horse—L. Rothschild's Sir Bevys Wins Derby, 1879—Bibury Dinner, Stockbridge Meeting—Match-making with Caledon Alexander—Drumhead and Briglia, Owners up, $1\frac{1}{2}$ Miles—Drumhead Wins—Ploughing-match Void—Pigeon-match Won by Alexander—I make a Match with Gretton—Drumhead Breaks Down—Rayon d'Or Wins the Leger, 1879—I, a New Hat—Rosycross Wins Lincoln Handicap, 1880—Bend Or—Robert the Devil—I Lose my Betting-book—An Effort of Genius!—Moonstone—Zanoni—A Good Deal—Jack Peyton—Gretton and Fernandez—Beaten by Lucetta—Poor Gretton!

IN 1878, Stirling Crawford, a bosom friend of the late George Payne's, and like him a thorough gentleman and good sportsman, either when holding his own with the Quorn, or at any and every kind of shooting, or in the management of his lengthy string of racehorses, won the Derby with a moderate horse, Sefton by Speculum. But few benefited by the win, for the simple reason that in the City and Suburban, the three-year-old with 5 st. 8 lbs. on his back only just won by a head

from Advance, 5 yrs., 8 st., quite a second-class horse, who was actually giving him six pounds over weight for age.

In July I bought a horse that I had coveted for some time, more from his make and shape than from any form he had shewn—Drumhead, 5 yrs., by the Drummer out of Refreshment. I had the luck to claim him out of a selling-race at Sandown for three hundred. Blanton put the polish on him, and he won an "Apprentice Plate" at Newmarket Second October, and the next day he won again. In both races he was ridden by a lad named Brogden, whose stable name was "Bloater," as he came from Yarmouth. He looked after Drumhead, and was a very comical boy, and when winning this his first race, he was so elated that before reaching the judge's box he waved his cap in the air as a token of triumph. The second day he rode a really good race, but his success quite turned his head, and when I went to stables in the evening, Blanton, who was a first-class stableman—no better—observed that "Bloater" had not removed the marks of the girths under his horse's belly, and the boy being somewhat saucy, Blanton took him by the hair of his head and pushed him under the horse, saying : " Now, you young rascal, look up there and tell me if you call that doing your horse properly." The

boy had to get his tools and finish Drumhead's toilet.

Next morning, I noticed "Bloater" had had his hair pretty well shaved off his head, and asked what had happened to him, and it came out that, after the rough handling of the evening before, he went to the saddle-room, and gave one of the lads a shilling to clip his hair close, saying, he would take care that his master should not get hold of him by his hair any more. The present I had given him did him a lot of harm; he got into a bad set, and I heard of him no more. But to return to Drumhead. He was the means of my winning £1000 on Isonomy the following week, "thusly"—Gretton suddenly appeared at our cottage one morning whilst we were at breakfast, and asked me to lend him Drumhead, to make one of the trial horses he was going to gallop Isonomy with before the Cambridgeshire. I was only too pleased to oblige him, though I told him my horse was not good enough to tell him anything; but he said he was quite satisfied already that his horse would win, and I must stand forty ponies with him. I demurred, as Isonomy's merits up to then were obscure, and I had already more on the race than I cared to lose; however, he persuaded me to stand £1000 to 25 with him, and said the wife must have £200 to 5, too,

and right enough it was, for Isonomy won comfortably ; but I should never have backed it had it not been for Drumhead and Gretton mixed.

One morning in 1879 I opened the front door of our cottage to an American sportsman, Mr. Robins, who had come over to take the management of a few horses Mr. Lorillard of New York had sent over to Newmarket to be trained, and he handed me a letter of introduction from a mutual friend. Having lit a cigar, we talked over the reason of his calling. I had noticed a very peculiar shaggy and rough coated old gelding leading the Yankee's select string at work of a morning, and Robins informed me that this same horse was a real good animal, having so proved himself in his native country, and he wanted me to back him for the Newmarket Handicap, which was run that week, to win £20,000. Now, as there was little or no betting on the race before the numbers went up, I suggested that he should begin the other end, and state what money he was game to lose, and that I would do the best I could for him ; moreover, I should get a better price than most, because I was going to back my own horse Drumhead, for a monkey for the same race ; the result was that I agreed to back Parole for a monkey. He carried 8 st. 4 lbs. and mine 7 st. 2 lbs., and to look at the

two horses it was good odds that mine ought to beat the other at even weights ; but you can't go by looks, that's for certain, ain't it ?

Just before the start I declared to Robins that I should have to pay him about £4500 to his £600 if Parole won, and I should win about £4000 if Drumhead won ; but, like a fool, I never had a bob on the Yankee. Nevertheless, I saw him win very cleverly, a long way in front of my sleek old gee. The Yank turned out a real useful horse, for not only did he win a lot of races, but he was school-master to Iroquois, another American-bred horse who won the Derby and Leger in 1881, besides many good stakes at Ascot and Newmarket. He was a cast-iron horse ; for, in my life, I have never seen any horse stand such a tremendous preparation as his trainer gave him for the Leger, and though the touts often reported him settled, you had to lay "long twos" on him on the Leger day, the race never being in doubt. I wish Iroquois had not returned to his native land, for he was just the horse I should have liked to have bred from.

In 1879, I had a fair race on Sir Bevys, L. Rothschild's horse, for the Derby. I had backed him entirely because Fordham rode him, and, curiously enough, it was the first Derby the "Kid" had ever had his number put up first ; though I always fancy

he did win on Lord Clifden in 1863, when Macaroni was said to have beaten him a head. At the same time, I freely admit no one but the man in the box can say for certain what has won at Epsom, as the stand is so far behind the winning-post. This being the first Derby Leo. Rothschild had won, he came in for quite an ovation ; and quite right too, for, like his good old uncle, he is never so pleased as when all his pals win with him.

We had a real cheery party at Stockbridge this year. The Bibury Club Dinner was held in the Grosvenor Arms Hotel, and I fancy I was in the chair ; at any rate I was "all there," and ripe for match-making. Dear old Caledon Alexander was also full of play ; so, after a lot of talk and a certain amount of "wet," he and I made three matches—viz., to plough an acre of land for £200 ; to shoot fifty pigeons for £200 ; and I was to ride my horse Drumhead, 6 yrs., against Alec's mare Briglia, 5 yrs. (owner up), Suffolk Stakes Course, one mile and a half, at Newmarket July, for a monkey. All these three matches were written out and duly signed. The next morning I invested in two thick woollen jerseys, and started running and walking to Houghton Down (where Tom Cannon then trained) and back, and I got rid of some five or six pounds of fat ; but was so thirsty after it, and the pop at luncheon

so beguiling, that I don't think I was an ounce lighter the next morning ; however, I kept up a fair amount of exercise, and got off over a stone, but dared not get any lower. Old Alec tried to reduce himself as well, but he went wrong in his feet and had to give up.

Well, we both got to Newmarket a few days before the race week, and I practised standing up in my stirrups for a mile, and then two, and borrowed an old hunter of Joe Cannon, Foxhound by name, to take me round the Bury Hills. He carried me so well that I gave J. C. two hundred for him, a very clever hunter he was ; but he was real glad I fancy, when the match was over. Of course I rode Drumhead a bit too, and found him carry me like a bird. Alec, on the other hand, didn't get on at all comfortably with Briglia, as she was as narrow as a knife, and a bit too hasty for him.

The day for the match arrived, and a comical pair of jockeys we were ; extra weights had to be employed when we went to the scale. I weighed 16 stone 6 lbs., and Alec 16 stone, with our nasty little seven-pound saddles, totally unsuited to our well favoured figures. I cantered my cob down to the post, and there found Alec emerging from his brougham and pair. I believe the betting was



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SIR JOHN ASTLEY ON DRUMHEAD

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7 to 4 on Briglia, as doubtless she was better form than Drumhead ; but my horse was well calculated to carry weight, and Alec's mare was not. We jumped off pretty well together, and Alec made the running (willy nilly, I fancy). At the turn into the straight Bunbury mile I was as near as a toucher turning too short, through mistaking the post ; but Tom Jennings and some of the mounted sports halloaed to me just in time, therefore I didn't lose much by the mistake, and when we got fairly in the straight I was only two lengths in the rear. However, Drumhead was going great guns, and he gradually got to the mare, and at the corner of the Plantation—some four hundred yards from home—I would have bet a guinea to a shilling, for dear old Alec was very uneasy on his small plate and Briglia was in difficulties. So I let Drumhead stride along, and won anyhow by three lengths. Deary me ! there was some cheering, and amid roars of laughter we shook hands. I know I hurried off to the luncheon tent for a glass, for what with the excitement, and the mighty effort of standing up in one's tiny stirrups for a mile and a half, I was real thirsty. Thus ended match number one. The ploughing-match never came off, I wish it had ; and Alec beat me at pigeons at Brighton the Saturday after Goodwood races. I shot very

badly, and only killed 33 birds to Alec's 38 out of 50.

My success had so elated me that I made a match with Gretton for five hundred, one hundred forfeit; I to ride Drumhead, 6 yrs., and Billy Beville to ride Solomon, 6 yrs., 16 st. each, last two miles of Cesarewitch course. About this time, Blanton, finding that he had more horses than he could look after, shunted me and two others; in consequence of which I moved my horses to Joe Dawson's stables at Bedford Lodge; and after I had made this match Dawson told me that "he was afraid Drumhead's near foreleg was a bit dicky," and I ought to have paid forfeit, as it certainly was a bit warmer than the other. But I despised Solomon, he was a great big coachhorse, and slow as a man, though a fair stayer; and I thought I could wait on him and beat him for speed to a certainty at the finish. Still, to carry sixteen stone two miles, a horse must be real sound on his legs, and I had to pay for my obstinacy; for when we had gone about a mile and a half, and Beville had been kicking and cuffing at Solomon all the way, I intimated to my good old horse that we might venture to get a little nearer than the two lengths which had parted us all the way; but Drumhead changed his leg more than once, and in a stride or

two I felt him falter, so I pulled up and jumped off at the Bushes, and my horse was led home. Poor old chap! I felt much annoyed with myself, for I ought not to have lost my own or my friends' money.

Good old Drumhead! he was the very kindest and quietest of horses. I once gave him some whisky before he ran at Shrewsbury, as I thought he didn't quite struggle as gamely as he ought, and the old boy liked the cordial so well, that he followed me round the paddock in hopes of another suck at the bottle; yet he had no Scotch blood in him that I know of! As soon as he could travel I sent him home to Elsham, and had my picture done sitting on his back. Yes, he and I were great friends; and, to show the mutual confidence that existed between us, I have often sat on his quarters and smoked my baccy whilst he was lying down in his box. I sold him later on to A. Lumley, of Rufford, where he enjoyed a comfortable home till he died. My jockey kit has been in silver paper ever since, and I don't suppose I shall ever struggle into it again; though I am still open to a retaining fee as first jockey to any square owner, and could go to scale about 14 sts. 7 lb., having dwindled down two stone.

Rayon d'Or won the Leger this year, 1879, and

I won a fair stake ; for at Goodwood I thought that big leggy chestnut had much improved, and told his trainer I fancied he would be his best at Doncaster ; but Jennings didn't agree with me, and said he considered Zut ten pound the better horse. Nevertheless, I bet him a new hat that Rayon d'Or would be his best, and also took forty fifties about him, being much pleased at getting such a price, especially as I saw the Lord of Crichel snap up 2000 to 60, and he isn't generally satisfied with anything but the very top of the market. It was all the same on the Monday after the Leger, and I won a new hat as well. In the year 1886 I had got comfortably settled in Joe Dawson's stable ; he was the prince of trainers, and, indeed, one of " Nature's noblemen ;" everything was done in the most perfect way, and no man could prepare a two-year-old for its engagements, early or late, as he could. This year he won the Lincoln Handicap in March with Rosy Cross, 6 yrs., a beautiful brown mare belonging to H. Rymill, who told me he fancied her chance much. So I backed her to win me a nice little stake ; and here a fortunate superstition I entertained about picking up horseshoes came in handy. The mare was saddled on the common outside the ring, and as I walked across to have a look at her, with good old Joe Danby, my foot

hit against some hard substance in the long grass. I caught sight of a horseshoe, and picking it up, showed it with great glee to Dawson, telling him I should have another hundred on the mare; upon which he asked me to put him on fifty as well. I got 20 to 1 to the money, and after the mare had won, we had a friendly glass together over that lucky shoe.

How is it one don't kick against horseshoes now? I suppose it's the advance of technical education, the consequence being that they don't come off; at any rate the twenty to one don't, with me. My old trainer, Blanton, and his friend Brewer—a large commission agent—this year owned a real good three-year-old in Robert the Devil; he was homebred, and was by Bertram out of Cast Off, a small, insignificant little mare, not even at the top of plating form, nor was the sire more than a second-class horse. I often used to look in at Blanton's and see this horse; but, somehow, I didn't fancy him as much as his owners did, and when Rossiter threw the race away I wasn't so cut up as many of my friends were, as Bend Or beat Robert by a head. However, the tables were turned in the Leger, for Robert won, and Bend Or was beaten out of a place.

I had a nasty jar on this Derby day. There was

a big crowd at the Downs Station after the races, and I was doing my best to get my wife and a friend into the railway carriage, but whilst holding the door with one hand, and keeping the crowd back with the other, my betting-book was extracted from my pocket. I found out my loss as soon as we were seated, and then and there pulled myself together and tried to recollect all the bets I had made that day (the Tuesday's bets I had copied out before leaving home in the morning) and, fortunately, I put down every bet right, both as to amount and names of those I bet with: therefore, considering I had made thirty bets, it was a good performance. I got a new book for the next day (Thursday) and went down to Epsom in good time, and, after comparing each bet, found I was right to a pound; and very lucky it was, for I had won £1425 over Chevronel and £800 on Dreamland, although I only cleared £1015 on the day, losing every bet on the Derby. I always reckon that was the highest test I ever put my small modicum of brain to.

This was a merry meeting for me. Moonstone, 3 yrs., by Queen's Messenger (whom I had bought the previous autumn as a two-year-old, after winning a selling-race at Newmarket for 380 guineas) ran second on the Tuesday to Chevronel,

5 yrs.; so I bought the winner for 230 guineas. He was a real grand horse, but was somewhat disfigured by the loss of one eye, and having both hocks fired; he had never shown any form before, and on this occasion started at 20 to 1, unbacked by his owner or trainer. He turned over a new leaf as soon as I got him, and did me many a good turn; his legs were made of steel, and the harder the going the better he liked it, and he used to come down that Epsom course like a blast of wind. If he only got off he was bad to beat, and didn't care for weight. The day after I bought him he won me a race at 7 to 1, and another on the Friday at 4 to 1, and I won £1900. Subsequently at Brighton he landed a nice stake at 8 to 1. So he wasn't a bad buy, although he had but one eye—what do you think?

Now, you often see a horse that runs well at Epsom show to advantage at Brighton. Moonstone did me a real good turn this week, for not only was he the means of my buying Chevronel, but on the Thursday when he won I backed him freely, and that wasn't one of the silliest days of my life, as I will try and convince you. As I was going down to Epsom that morning by train, I was studying the race-card with all my might, and made out that the Selling Handicap was a real good thing for one of

two, viz., Zanoni or my horse Moonstone, and was grumbling to myself that I should have to back both. No sooner had I arrived in the Club stand than up came that prince of good fellows, and perhaps the smartest big man I ever beheld in cavalry uniform—when he commanded the 18th Hussars—Jack Peyton, and thus he began: “Ah bedad, Mate, and how are ye? It’s yourself that’s always fond of buying a good selling-plater.” “Right you are, Jack! and what’s its name?” “Ah, well, it’s my cousin that owns Zanoni, and he wants to sell him.” “Where’s the horse, and how much does he want for him?” “He’ll just be in the paddock, I’m thinking, and it’s a monkey he wants for him; he should be worth that same, anyway.” “Right,” I said; “we will go and have a look at him,” and down we went, and “cousin” and I soon came to terms, for I was very keen, and he took my hand over my first offer—four hundred on Monday, and one hundred first win.

I felt rich directly; for now Moonstone was good—in fact, a dead snip—for the Selling Handicap: for, though the Peytons and their trainer urged me to run Zanoni, as he was so well and sure to win, yet I was firm, and made up my mind I would put him upsides of my trying tackle at Newmarket before I put the dollars down, and I advised them

to have a dash on Moonstone, as I meant to do. And, would you believe it? the benighted bookies laid 7 to 1—such a tempting price that I invested a bit extra, and when I tottled up my book (after he had won comfortably) I found I had landed £4350 on him, besides having Zanoni to look forward to. Moonstone won me another race at Brighton and again at Shrewsbury.

This autumn I went for a big stake on the Cambridgeshire, having got into my head that Fernandez, 3 yrs., 8 st. 1 lb., ridden by Fordham, was real good goods. He was own brother to Isonomy, and his owner, having won a great stake the year before on this race, meant having another try. I never shall forget Gretton taking me into Fernandez's box the evening before the race. He had done himself a little extra well (as was not his unfrequent habit), and when I said I had never seen a horse look better, and that I considered the race as good as over, he replied, "Yes, that's all very well; but he has got at least ten pounds more on him than he would have had if Tom Cannon had not gone and run Bend Or to a head for the St. James's Palace Stakes at Ascot. Whatever did he want to beat the Derby winner for? I told him the horse wasn't fit, and that I wanted to win the Cambridgeshire with him. I never can

make out what Tom was about that day. Oh dear! oh dear! it would have been a good thing to-morrow if Tom hadn't gone and raced the winner of the Derby! Whatever did he do it for?" And when I left him he was still bemoaning his jockey's uprightness over a glass of Scotch, though the reason wasn't very far to seek.

If you put a square jockey on a good horse and the stake is worth nearly £2000, you wouldn't expect to see your horse beat off, would you? However, next day when Fordham on Fernandez had apparently the race in hand, Soltykoff's little four-year-old mare Lucetta, carrying 7 st. 1 lb., swerved right across the course and finished on the low side, beating Fernandez by a bare half-length. Of course, there was an objection; but the stewards confirmed the judge's verdict. I made good use of the half-hour they were taking evidence by hedging some of my money, and as I had £2500 to £1 about Lucetta beforehand, I had a fair race; though, as has so often happened to me, I missed the big money by sheer bad luck, for had not Fordham chucked up his horse to save him striking into the mare he would have won right enough. Poor Gretton was fit to be tied, and must have consumed enough Scotch to wash a bus before he got over this sad slip between the cup and the lip.

CHAPTER XIII.

Stay at Wynnstay for Chester—Lord Combermere—Frank Foster—Tom Drake—Lords Portsmouth and Falmouth of the Party—Simpson the Stud-Groom—Windsor, 4 Years, Wins the Cup—I Buy Peter—Terrible Luck at Manchester—Peter at Ascot—A Wonderful Win—The American Plunger—A Deadly Nuisance—I give him a Bit of my Mind—Unlucky with Rowell, 2 Years—Table of Running for Year—Hard Up—I Sell Peter to Richard Combe for £6000—Struggle on Afresh—Archer and Edensor—Highborn and Lefevre—Dresden China—Ought to have Won Cesarewitch—My Winnings during 26 Years—My System not altogether to be Recommended—Different Natures take their Losses Differently—Author or Bear—Dormouse or Fossil—A Word to others as to the Reason of so many Men going to the Wall, Racing—Stakes much larger than they were up to 1882—Renders Betting not quite so Absolutely Necessary.

IN May, 1881, I went to stay with good old Watty Wynn, at Wynnstay, for Chester. What a rare sort was Sir Watkin! He didn't care a deal about racing, but was very fond of hunting, and kept a wonderful clever lot of weight-carrying hunters, most of them bought for him by his old comrade and fast friend in the Household Cavalry, Lord Combermere, as good a fellow as ever lived! Old Simpson was his stud-groom, a truly remarkable character, both to

look at and to listen to ; and the week in question we had a cheery lot of old sports, for Alexander, Frank Foster, Tom Drake, Portsmouth, and Falmouth were of the party.

I had bought the year before a nicely turned little three-year-old mare, by Hermit out of Musket's dam, after winning a selling-race at the Royal Borough ; so I christened her "Windsor." She had a fair turn of speed, and could stay a little bit, and as she was nicely handicapped in the Chester Cup I had her sent there ; but Dawson didn't think much of her chance, and did not go to Chester. On the Tuesday evening I took Tom Drake to the stables to see my mare, and we found her so much amiss that we both thought it folly to run her. However, next morning before the races, I took Simpson with us, and he prescribed a tonic for the mare, and she seemed so much more comfortable after it that I sent her into the paddock, and well watched her. She settled down, and was so calm that I took 1000 to 60 five times about her, and told Weston (the jockey whose acquaintance I had made whilst investigating the Glance case in 1875) to take the lead as soon as he could get to the front, keep close to the rails, and never let any horse get upsides of him if he could help it, and that he should have fifty ready if he won. Sure enough the mare was so

handy, that round the first turn she got inside, and Weston kept her there, made all the running, and won cleverly, this pretty win being solely attributable to old Simpson's tonic.

Sad to say, all those good men and true who were of that party have been gathered, except Frank Foster and myself; and so has Simpson, but he bequeathed me the receipt, and it is still on offer at a nominal sum. Windsor didn't do much good afterwards, and Blanton bought her at my sale in December, and put her to the stud; she is the dam of Windgall, a good, but unlucky horse.

Now I had coveted Peter, 5 yrs., by Hermit out of Lady Masham for some months, and old Gee, who had bought him at General Peel's sale, had given me the refusal of him for six thousand guineas, for being an old friend of Dawson's he was very wishful that the horse should stop in the stable. The moment Windsor had weighed out all right, I wired off to Gee that I would buy Peter, asking him to meet me at Newmarket on the Saturday. He duly turned up and the bargain was concluded; though not without the assistance of an old friend, who lent me £2500 out of the £6300 I paid for the best horse of his day—if not of any other. On that Saturday morning I caught Archer on the Bury Hills, and he opened his eyes wide when I

told him I had bought Peter, as he imagined that one or two men whose income was more per week, than mine was per year, would buy the horse. I chided him for thinking they would be so rash, and told him I hoped he would ride Peter for me in the Hunt Cup at Ascot, which he was sure to win no matter what weight he was handicapped at, and he at once agreed; and I began thinking whether the Cup would be as nice a one as was Hopbloom's.

One morning, about a week after, Peter went so well one mile and a half, that I asked Sherrard, who had now taken the management of the horses at Bedford Lodge (poor Joe Dawson being very ill), to let Peter go round the Lime Kilns with Foxhall, 3 yrs., who was then being trained for the Grand Prize, and I never saw a horse cut down another easier than Peter did the Yankee; and when we weighed their riders after the morning's work, we found that Peter was giving Foxhall two stone and a half, and it looked as if he could give him another stone, anyhow. So I made up my mind to have a cut in with him for the Manchester Cup, one mile and three-quarters.

Now comes (to my mind) the most extraordinary bit of bad luck I ever heard of. Of all the unwritten laws of racing the one most generally observed is, that an owner ought never to take off

the jockey of the stable, if he is a good rider, and has served him well and faithfully ; so I had told C. Wood he was to ride Peter in the Manchester Cup. The week before the race, as Archer was riding out of the gate at Kempton he gave me a note, saying: "This will interest you, Sir John. I will ride Peter if you wish," and away he cantered down to the post. I read the note he had handed me, it was from Captain Machell to Archer:—"Dear Sir, if you will ride Valour in the Manchester Cup I will run him ; if not, I shall not send him to Manchester." When Archer came back he asked, 'What answer shall I send the Captain ?' I told him on no account would I take the stable jockey (Wood) off my horse. I had asked him (Archer) to ride Peter in the Hunt Cup, because I knew two of Wood's masters—who had prior claims on his services—were certain to want him ; and added—with a slight dash of scorn—he might ride Valour by all means, but what chance had he to beat Peter at four pounds ? Well ! it came to pass that my doing the proper thing was the cause of great disaster to me, for in the race, Valour beat Peter a neck, which made a difference to me of over twelve thousand pounds ; besides which, had Peter won, I should have then and there bought Barcaldine of his Irish owner.

It was aggravating, very ! Archer never rode a

better race than that Manchester Cup, and I verily believe Peter could have given Valour twenty-one pounds. I should have made a match with Machell, but Peter was not to be relied upon ; he might not start, or he might stop in the race. That was not my only bad luck that day. I had brought two useful selling-platers to get my money back in case Peter did not win, and the very next race after the Cup, I started Costa in a selling-race and backed him freely. He won cleverly ; but, as I was talking to some one, I did not go to see the horse weigh in, when, suddenly, up ran somebody and told me Wood could not draw the weight. I scuttled into the weighing-room, and whilst the horse's bridle was being taken off, I told the clerk of the scales to put four pounds in ; as that hardly turned the scale, of course the bridle was useless and Costa was disqualified ; therefore my losses were considerably increased, instead of lightened. A four-pound cloth must have been abstracted by some interested individual ; for it is any odds that Wood weighed out right.

I never recollect to have heard of any harder luck than those two consecutive fiascos. In the first place, had I taken Wood off and put Archer up, Valour would not have run and Peter would have won lengths ; in the second, had the weights not

been tampered with I should have been handy "home, sweet home." No, it was hot—very hot. However, I pulled out Zanoni next day, and he not only won, but weighed in all right; so I had a smirk and a smile left; for I had bought Zanoni—as I told you—at Epsom last year under somewhat peculiar circumstances, fancying that he would bring me some chips, and he *did*, at a most useful juncture, and no error. Well! the sometimes naughty Peter was none the worse for his Manchester race, and he and I duly arrived at Ascot, and as there were only some ribs in the Queen's Vase on the Tuesday, I thought Peter might canter with them, and place that piece of plate on my sideboard. But there must be two to any bargain, and Peter didn't fall in with my views, for when he got to the stable turn he pulled up and began kicking, and eventually returned to the paddock. That looked bad for the Hunt Cup on the morrow; but, notwithstanding his foolish pranks on Wednesday morning, I found he was first favourite, and I had to take 5 to 1.

I warned Archer, when about to mount, to treat him kindly, and, if he felt like stopping, to pat his neck and coax him. I also sent "Farmer"* Giles on my cob down to the post with a hunting-whip, being afraid that Peter might run back and try

* Giles the jockey, nicknamed "Farmer."

what the iron gates were made of, at the start for the new mile. All who were there, know what a wonderful animal Peter proved himself that day. Soon after he started he began to scotch, and was on the point of stopping to kick, as he had done the day before ; but Archer patted him (according to my orders) and though at the half-mile he was a long way last, he suddenly took hold of his bit, and, coming up hand over hand, he won quite cleverly, and that with 9 st. 3 lbs. on his back. When Giles returned on my cob he could not believe it possible the horse had won ; for he declared he was so far behind at the half-mile post when he went over the hill, that he felt certain he would be last at the finish. However, he realised the fact when I gave him a "pony" for his trouble ; and he bought a black pony with it, which he afterwards rode constantly at Newmarket.

On the Friday, Peter looked good (if in the humour) for the Hardwicke Stakes, worth over three thousand, and here Archer's wonderful forethought came in useful. Before the races began he said to me : "I have been thinking over this race, Sir John. You know the start for the mile and a half we run to-day is just below the spot where Peter stopped to kick on Tuesday, and it is very likely, if I canter up past it with the other horses,

he may take it into his head to repeat his Tuesday's performance. If you will get leave from the stewards, I will hack canter him round the reverse way of the course, and arrive at the starting-post just as the other horses fall in ; by so doing, he may jump off and go kindly." "A brilliant idea, my lad," said I, and Peter was seen to emerge from the paddock some minutes before the other horses. Luckily, they were off at the first attempt, and he literally *walked in*, eight lengths ahead. I didn't bet till I saw Peter was fairly off, but was fortunate to have two good bookies, hungry to get back some of the Hunt Cup money I had won of them, and so I landed some £1500 at evens.

I wonder where Valour would have been that day ? Why, sprawling like a drunken gipsy under the Spagnoletti board, whilst Peter was pulling double past the post. No ! Peter was a rattling good horse that Ascot, and how he came to disgrace himself as he did at Goodwood I never could understand. In the Cup, only three runners, he, with two stone in hand, was cantering behind his moderate companions, as the three disappeared from view on the far side of the Cup course, and lo ! when the competitors came in sight again, there were only two, and wilful Peter presently returned by a short cut to the paddock, after having got

tired of kicking; and ditto ditto in the Singleton Stakes the same afternoon. Peter won me one more race at Newmarket, and ran a real good horse in the Jockey Club Cup, when beaten by Corrie Roy by a head, giving her plenty of weight. I had a good Epsom this year (1881); my two best winners, curiously enough, being the same horses that had benefited me most the previous year at Epsom—viz., Chevronel, on whom I won £3560 on the Tuesday, and, the same day, £2100 on Moonstone.

I had bought a selling-plate winner at Lincoln Spring, Medicus, 2 yrs., by Joskin, for 140 guineas, and he turned out a very consistent runner, winning me several races, and being in the first three every time he ran but once, that being at Newmarket, when ridden by a foolish jockey. He was beaten out of a place on the Wednesday in the Criterion Nursery; but, the next day—with Wood on his back—he won a mile nursery. This was the time that nuisance, the Yankee plunger, “Walton,” got all the money as soon as the numbers were up, and I was obliged to give him a bit of my mind in somewhat forcible language. Another very sharp horse at five furlongs, I bought at Manchester—Glen Albyn, by Blair Athol. By far the best two-year-old of my own breeding was Rowell, by

Hermit out of Vigorous, a beautiful colt ; and when I tried him I fondly hoped that the 10,000 to 100 I had taken of Captain Batchelor for the Derby of 1882, would at all events see good hedging, if not be transferred to my pocket. But, alas ! whilst running in the July Stakes he broke a blood-vessel, and, though I gave him every chance, the same thing happened nearly every time he sported silk ; though at exercise, he could get through real good gallops with Blower and Corky (two other decent two-year-olds I possessed) without accident. I had over sixty horses pass through my hands this year ; but many of them (claimed in selling-races) I let go, if not good enough to keep. I won *sixty-four* races, more, I believe, than was ever won by any man in one year, and I thus totted down the result on the back of one of the Right Hon. Jim Lowther's electioneering cards, which I now copy :

My horses ran 261 times ; therefore, as the following table shows, they were in the first three 149 times out of 261 starts :

Placed first	.	.	.	.	.	.	64
„ second	.	.	.	.	.	.	54
„ third	.	.	.	.	.	.	31
Unplaced	.	.	.	.	.	.	112
							<hr/>
							261

“ Ride 'em out, lad.”

This year I won £16,800 in bets and £15,871 in stakes, and yet was cruel hard up ; so, after the

Houghton week, I fortunately found a good customer for poor Peter in Richard Combe, who, I believe, as much out of kindness as because he wanted the horse, gave me a cheque for six thousand pounds (most of which went into the pockets of the bookies), and he put him to the stud. He stood at a place near Cobham his first season, where the men were frightened at him, and when I went down one day to see him, the man in charge said: "Take care how you go up to him, sir!" I told him to undo the rack-chain, and leave me in the box with Peter, and no sooner did I talk to him than he knew me at once, and put his nose almost into my coat-pocket, to look for a bit of sugar. The following year, when he was located at Newmarket, where he was well cared for, I went, with some other men—after the races—to see him, and directly I halloed to him, "How are you, old boy?" he hinnieed with delight, though the door was shut and he could not see me; but, directly I went into the box, we were fast friends at once. He is now abroad. His stock are many of them very speedy, but lack bone (as a rule), and are none too reliable. A more sensible horse in the stable there never was, but on the racecourse Peter was an idiot, at times.

On December 20th I sold seventeen horses at

Tatterstall's, and they fetched £8710; Medicus, £1500, was the highest price.

I came up smiling (grimly) in 1882, and began well by winning the Brocklesby Stakes at Lincoln with Petticoat, a very speedy two-year-old chestnut filly by Blair Athol out of Crinon, that I had bought at Chobham Sale last summer, same day that I bought Lovely, by Alvarez out of Electric Light, two well-chosen youngsters who paid me well, the two only costing me six hundred pounds. I also ran a two-year-old, one of my own breeding, Saucy Boy, the produce of the marriage of Scamp and Bridget. He won three or four races, and was perhaps the most perfectly formed little animal I ever saw. I must tell you another trait of Archer's extraordinary forethought and keenness to ride a winner. I had bought Edensor, 3 yrs., by Lowlander, the year before of Lord Huntly, but he only won me one race at Goodwood, and that was on the Friday, when very few of my pals were on; but, unfortunately, very many of them had followed my tip, and backed him in the Stewards Cup on the Tuesday, when a small boy could make nothing of him, he being over sixteen hands.

Well, this year, 1882, the only race he won was at Newmarket July. It was a Welter Handicap, and I thought he had no chance; in fact, I was not

going to run him, till Archer came up to me and asked, "if Edensor was going to run." On my saying "No, he could have no chance," he replied, "You ought to run him, and if you will let me ride him he will win, and you must back him." I never was more astonished; but, as I thought he must know more than I did, I told him he could ride the horse. I took 1000 to 100 about him, and he started first favourite at 5 to 2, and won. Archer knew something when he came and asked to ride him, *you may bet*, and, what is more, the horse never won again. At Sandown July I sold another batch of fifteen horses for £5900, and struggled on again.

In 1883 I don't think I had any horses, and at Doncaster I sold Highborn for 1000 guineas to Mr. Eyke, but, though at his new home he was the sire of several good jumpers, his stock did not shine on the flat. Highborn (originally named Plebiscite), by Gladiateur out of Fille de l'Air—perhaps the two best French animals that ever raced in England—was given me my M. Lefevre. One evening he was showing me his horses in T. Jennings's stable, and in one of the boxes was a good looking three-year-old which had somehow ricked its back; at any rate it dragged its hind legs, and had got the straw into heaps, from not being able to lift his hind feet over the bedding. Lefevre

was bemoaning his bad luck, as he had tried the colt as a two-year-old a neck better than Flageolet, and looked forward to his winning freely for him ; when, by some accident, the horse went wrong in his back, and having kept him a year he considered his case hopeless for racing purposes, and offered to give him to me. I said I would give him a trial, and when I got him home I put him on sawdust. In a short time he could move round his box with much more freedom, and soon was able to walk and trot fairly well. One of his first foals, was that topping good mare Dresden China, whose dam Fortress (a very moderate performer) belonged to a sporting yeoman, Bob Walker, a neighbour of ours, and a real good rider between the flags. The filly turned out a fair two-year-old, and if she had only been well managed as a three-year-old, she would have won the Cesarewitch for certain ; but her owner was too eager, and won the Great Yorkshire Handicap at Doncaster with her, so, having to carry the penalty, she was only third for the big handicap—what a fortune thrown away ! for, had he come to me and told me how good she was, and trusted me with the commission, I would gladly have guaranteed him £5000 to 100, besides which I should have had a pleasant win myself in 1879. In 1880 she won both Goodwood and Doncaster Cups.

But to return to Highborn: he soon began to show there was not much the matter with his back, for he acquired a trick of standing up on his hind legs and battering the brick wall of his box with his fore feet, and out of curiosity I measured the height from the floor to where he pounded the bricks. I found it ten feet four inches—the strongest backed horse in England could have reached no higher! I always speak of men as I find 'em, and I don't believe there was ever a straighter owner of racehorses than Lefevre. He showed his sense by giving Fordham a retainer, and the number of races he won for him by sheer riding was something wonderful. The most notable that occurs to me at this moment, was his winning the Jockey Club Cup on Ladislas by a head in the very last stride. Lefevre was a princely supporter of racing, was generous to a fault, and, unlike Count Lagrange, there was no mystery about his horses.

Now we approach the end of my racing career, at all events of my owning horses, and betting monkeys. I hardly bet this year at all till Ascot, and, though I won some £6000 between this and the end of the season, I was fairly settled, and in my betting ledger, which I kept very carefully up to December, 1883, I see the following somewhat peculiar note:—"Am dead broke, shall have to

live at Elsham entirely, like a blooming maggot in a nut. Shall I ever bet a 'monkey' on a race again? I should like to, but it's naughty, *nous verrons.*" What do you think? In twenty-six years I had won £28,968 by betting. Some of my readers may want to know how I managed to get broke if I won over a thousand a year. Now, you young men that happen to read this effusion, mark and learn. For the first three years I bet only in small sums, but lost each year about half my (then) small income. I had of course to borrow money to pay my way. This I did legitimately by insuring my life at three to three-and-a-half per cent., and borrowing money on the policy at five—*i.e.*, I had to pay £80 a year for every £1000 I borrowed.

As my income decreased I thought it advisable to increase my investments, and at one time my luck seemed to turn, as I began winning handsomely. For instance, in 1862 I won £11,097; in 1863, though I won over £11,000 in the Sussex fortnight, I only won £6000 on the year; so you may judge I was fairly on the job. When I won, I ought of course to have stored the chips for a rainy day, but I was goose enough to spend it, and when I lost I had to borrow, *voilà tout*. The wonder is not that I got broke, but how it was I lasted so long as I did—*viz.*, twenty-five years. It

requires a man of very superior ability, whose income is only £1500, paid quarterly, to realise, when he is paid twice that amount on a Monday in cash, after a fair week's luck, that his expenses must be guided by his legitimate income, and the superfluous dross must be devoted to paying off his debts, or even entrusted to his bankers. Well, my ability was *not* superior, that is certain ; and so I continued spending when I won, and borrowing when I lost ; till at last I had to pull up, and eke out the rest of my days, as I am now doing, on a small allowance.

You, my readers, may have noticed that sudden changes of this sort affect some men differently. Some hybernate the year round like the grizzly bear and the dormouse do in winter ; others turn into fossils, and are seen no more by their compeers ; others take to an inordinate amount of alcohol, which promptly lands them in the cremating pot ; others doze away their existence in foreign parts ; while some glorious examples may be found who, made of sterner stuff, attempt to increase their pensions by their wits, and though not naturally suited for the "lofty calling," become *authors* ! I ain't the bear or the dormouse, nor the fossil, nor the alcoholic sponge, nor the gourmand who lives on frogs and macaroni far from his native shore ; so I must be the elevated, and may I add the "in-

structive, author," who hopes by his confessions to dissuade young men from getting into debt, and then trying to get clear by gambling. The real reason that racing is accountable for so many men getting wrong is, that the ordinary run of mortals cannot put by their winnings. Then, again, the training, travelling, entering and forfeit expenses are very heavy, and require a substantial income to meet them without betting. Bear in mind also that, up to the time I got broke, the stakes to be won were very much smaller than they have been since 1882.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Gallant Major of Hussars—"Who says a Card?"—A Learned Divine—Granite or What?—My Brother an Adept at Cock-fighting—His Indian Birds—The Old Black Hen—I Travel Manchester Way to Witness a Cock-fight—Various Precautions—The Sapient Myrmidons of the Law—My Lane Companion—I'Anson's Sale at Malton—How we Outwitted the Police in the Eastern Counties—Painting the 'Bus Windows—The Wrong Scent—A Pleasant Day's Sport—A Few Words on the Pastime of Cock-fighting—A Tempting Offer—A Story of the Past wherein I Prove how Sensitive are the Feelings of some People—The Working-Man's Club—I produce my Running and Racing Prizes—Likewise the Garments Donned on most Occasions when Running—The Infuriated Sky Pilot—I Attempt to Pay him off—My Little New Year's Gift—The Stuffed Canary Presented by the Congregation—A Little Suggestion on the Subject.

It is very difficult to give up talking racing. Still, don't be frightened, I am not going to spin you a long yarn; but, on my way down to Ascot, in 1884, I happened to be in the same railway carriage as a very smart Major of Hussars, whom I did not then know. I had bought a race-card, and—after much study—by the time we had got to Staines I had marked (to my mind) the probable winners; and this is a custom I still keep up. The Major had

vainly shouted at several stations for a "*kerrect card*," without obtaining one; so, as I was bent on getting a little "ready" to face the bookies with, I offered him my card, ready marked and nicely trimmed, all for one-and-six—cheap as rags!—and he, luckily, became its possessor. With fair good fortune I bought another card at the next station for sixpence, so I had a nice balance of twelve pence to gamble with.

You must know I had now taken to betting ready money only, a great safeguard. It's that terrible easy custom of betting "on the nod" that plays havoc even with the most careful, particularly after a free luncheon with the soldiers. Well, I had been most fortunate in my selections *en route*, and, beginning with a very small outlay, had run into £150. I had only bet on four races, and was on the spot each time. At the Turf Club that evening, I was congratulated by a pal on having had a real good day. I asked whence he got his information. He said: "The Major who bought your marked card is a friend of mine." And it appears that he had told him how I had been the means of turning the first three days of heavy loss into a glorious "home, sweet home" day on the fourth, and a nice bit to take on Monday. Wonderful luck for him, wasn't it? The gallant soldier sent me a

very pretty pencil-case to commemorate his gratitude. He told me afterwards that he had followed my markings explicitly, and only backing one, had spotted the winner of every race. Moral: When you travel with a *savant*, pick his brains and don't be niggardly in paying for the treat. "Who says a marked card for one-and-six?" Be in time.

That word *savant* brings to my recollection an occasion when I sat at dinner next to an eminent divine, I believe quite at the top of the geologists' handicap. At any rate, I was told so, when I asked before dinner who the old boy was. We had not many topics in common (funny if we had), so I bethought me of a conversation I had been obliged to listen to a few days before, and with an amount of nerve which you will allow did me some credit, I boldly asked my neighbour what in his opinion was the primary formation. (I mean, of course, long before Adam and Eve began tailoring). The learned one was all there, and at once replied: "Granite." Delicious! (I had almost said silicious); just the very substance I had hoped he would select. I had him on toast, and with as pitying a rejoinder as I could command, said: "Oh, dear no; that could not be, as a friend of mine had seen the impression of a leaf on a piece of granite." The sage lit up, and with an exclamation of "You don't

say so!" on his lips, and a grateful glance at our host for having placed him next so brilliant a scholar, he was preparing to trot me out again. But, though I longed to crush him by giving him the identical age of the toad that was found hibernating in the centre of a granite boulder, I thought I had best let triumph rest with me, and becoming stone—might have been granite—deaf on that side, was soon in busy jest with my other neighbour. Oh, dear me! I was getting very clever, and I attributed my increased intelligence to my having recently become a grandfather.

We will leave intellectual science for the present (may be for good), and take a peep at the scientific activity displayed by the gamest of the feathered tribe. One of my brothers (who was in the 11th Infantry Regiment) was, from quite a lad, passionately fond of game-fowls, and when quartered in India, soon became intimate with some of the dusky potentates who spare neither trouble or expense in breeding and fighting the very highest class of game-birds; and he was soon recognised as one of the most enthusiastic of cock-fighters. He used to write me long letters about their doings in the cock-pits of Lucknow, and other centres of sport, and thought nothing of travelling a thousand miles to witness a good main and maybe, handle his own

birds against those of some wealthy Rajah. Before I got broke I used to send him, now and again, a little present of coin, to swell his meagre pay; and I was considerably astonished, when he came home on leave, that he brought with him to Elsham some Indian game-birds, and to learn the value set on them by the Indian sports. The trouble he had taken to land these birds in this country was surprising, and yet some of the best of them had succumbed on the homeward journey.

I noticed one old black hen particularly, and on asking if she was of a high-class strain, he assured me that "she was at the very top of the pedigree-class, that no money could buy her, in fact he would have lost caste in India had he put a price on her. Moreover, he had been offered £20 each for her eggs." In my ignorance I could hardly conceive a man being hard up who owned such a gold-mine, what do you say? Well, this gem seemed to get acclimatised, and enjoyed life with others of both sexes; but she never laid an egg for two years (pretty manners, very). So he decided to send her back to her native home, and—would you believe it?—that bird was so clever that, when she was taken on board the troopship, she knew she was returning to her ancestral home, and showed her joy by then and there laying an egg! My readers will be satisfied

that it would be very difficult to set a price on such a bird. The cross with the Indians and the English game turned out well, and were very successful in the pit. To look at, their Indian heads are flatter and wider than our birds, and they are broader across the back. My brother was anxious that I should see his birds perform, so I started off to Manchester one evening, and he wrote me, I should be met on the railway platform at early dawn on the following morning, *by a party in the know*, who would conduct me to the rendezvous. All went well, and—after a long journey—about noon we arrived at a railway-station in a picturesque, but mountainous district. Some ten or twelve passengers, bent on the same errand as myself, turned out quickly and disappeared in various directions. I was told to walk up the road till I saw a lodge, then turn in and walk up the drive to a gentleman's house. This I did, and was much amused to see human heads peeping up at various points amongst the laurels and rhododendrons. I was ushered into the presence of the Squire, who told me "he hoped that we should have a real good main, and that he thought we were pretty safe not to be interrupted by the police." That was a comfort, and I pitched into a good luncheon, which was laid for a large

party ; but I was the only one that played the knife and fork.

According to orders, I strolled out to a cattle-yard some little distance from the house, and enclosed by four walls, inside which were some sheds and boxes for beasts ; under one of these sheds some nice green turfs were laid, forming a square ; this was the pit. From the woods on the side of the hill some thirty or forty sportsmen presently dropped in ; the birds were produced and the fun began. There were one or two false alarms of the approach of the myrmidons of the law (I must tell you that scouts were posted in various directions to give timely warning of danger), but all went merrily till eight or ten battles had been fought ; then, all of a sudden the birds were thrust into bags, and these were gently pushed into a large hole in the wall, and some straw piled over it ; the turfs were carried away, and before I realised the situation I found myself and a lame chap, the only two men near the place.

I had been advised to run and hide in the woods, but I had a heavy great coat on, and so elected to smoke my cigar and take stock of the cattle and horses in the field. My lame comrade was already hobbling round a mare and foal, as if no other object had brought him there. The pasture in which I

stood sloped down to a deep ravine, and toiling up this steep ascent appeared three men, one being a policeman and the other two in plain clothes. I asked the eager "bobby" as he hurried towards me, whether he knew where I could find the man that had charge of the cattle? and as he gasped for breath after his severe exertions, consulted him as to the state of the weather. My simple manner quite disarmed suspicion, and he hurried off to join the other two men, one of whom (I heard afterwards) was the chief constable of the district. They all three disappeared in the straw-yard, and after thoroughly searching for human malefactors and belligerent fowls without any result, they reappeared, well mopping their steaming brows, and agreed with me that the view and day were both hard to beat; subsequently retiring, leaving the boy in blue to keep watch.

I strolled down to the house, which appeared deserted, and, after a parting glass, got down to the station, from whence I took train to York, whither I was bound, for the purpose of attending I'Anson's sale at Malton, where the relatives of Queen Mary and her illustrious descendants were to be sold on the morrow.

My brother wrote me afterwards that "They brought off the main at three in the morning inside

the house." The police on this occasion were curiosities: they had found out that a lot of cocks had been brought to the station in bags, and had sent out two of their number at dawn disguised as poachers, with spades, two dogs, and a box of ferrets. These men were to rabbit, or pretend to be rabbiting, on the hill-side, some distance from the house, and were to convey the necessary information by signal to the agents of the law when the cock-fighting began. How their plot failed I never heard; but I believe the two spurious poachers were squared by coin or drink, and the other man had not sense enough to move the natural-looking heap of straw, that concealed the courageous factors of our illegal amusement.

I attended another main one day near a town in the Eastern counties, where everything was brought off nice and comfortable without any disturbance. The "bobbies" in the district were cleverly and thoroughly duped, considering that two or three mounted officers were stabled within a few yards of where they knew the birds were waiting to be taken to the field of battle, and, unless they could be put off the scent, the contemplated main could not be brought off; but, poor "bobbies," though keen and well intentioned, they were easily outwitted. There were two omnibuses in the yard of the inn where the

birds were located ; the large glass-windows of one 'bus were whitewashed, and after—apparently—considerable caution the horses were put to, the vehicle was driven out of the yard by a back way, and took a road due south. The "bobbies" in high glee let the whited bus get nicely on its way, then rode after it, just keeping it in sight, so as to be able to pounce on the law-breaking men and birds as soon as the place for debarkation was reached. After covering some seven or eight miles the bus was driven down to a likely looking farmyard, and the police prepared for a grand capture ; but, poor dears ! there was no sign of any law-breakers in or round the premises ; and when they sternly bid the driver open the door of the curiously tinted vehicle, they gazed on space.

Fun for them ; for, had they waited a few minutes longer, they might have had the privilege of riding after the other 'bus, which, without any attempt at concealment, and with its windows nice and bright, drove off due north, containing several men and birds all on pleasure bent, who were thus enabled to enjoy a quiet and uninterrupted afternoon's sport. I know it is my loss, but I never could get up any great amount of enthusiasm over a cock-fight, though, for the life of me, I can't see any great harm in it ; for it cannot make much odds to the bird

whether he is caught by the cook and has his carotid artery severed by a knife, or whether he is killed by the spur of his antagonist. If the bird could be consulted, it is any odds he would much prefer the latter arrangement, by which he would certainly have some fun for his money ; besides, if he proved himself an adept at the game of skill, would not only survive the conflict, but with his shrill clarion announce his readiness to meet all comers for many a year, to the dignified admiration of his half-dozen devoted wives.

There are lots of sportsmen, good and true, who regularly enjoy their favourite pastime, and only recently I was told I could witness a first-class main of £200, and £10 or £5 each battle, and not have to travel very far either by road or river. One of the experts who was to handle the birds is a friend of mine, and comes of ancient lineage, being somehow related to that well-known traveller William Gulliver, but he has more eyes than that old boy.

It is funny how some intelligent folks try to make mountains out of molehills, and would you believe it? that even the mention, let alone the sight, of any article of underclothing acts on their sensitive nerves as does the red cloth on the infuriated bull? You will want to know what I am driving at, well!

it was this way. You may remember that when I was narrating my own performances on the cinder-path, I alluded to the light and airy costume I used to run my races in, which consisted (if no ladies were present) of a tiny pair of drawers—made of silk—with a pattern like the plaid band round the Scots Guards forage caps. If the fair ones were to the fore, the same little gems were pulled over silk tights. Well, these small coverings reposed, and do still, in one of my racing cups, and to the innocent amusement of my guests I not unfrequently produced the dapper garment, and have never been even reproved for so doing.

At a town, about fifteen miles from Elsham, I was asked by a charming lady to come over and assist at the opening of a Working-man's Club. I was to be sure to bring my racing and running cups, and not to forget the dear little silken garment which she had had the privilege of inspecting. Accordingly I sent my cups; and, neatly folding up the tiny "envelopes," I put them in my *cigar-case*, and hied me to the new building I was asked to open. There were many ladies present, and—as is my wont—I blundered through a few sentences on the objects of the building, &c., and then, pointing to my running cups and champion belt in the Crimea, I dilated on the great advantage running possessed over other

athletic sports and pastimes, in so much that all my luggage was enclosed in my cigar-case, which I produced from my pocket, and, amidst much laughter, pulled out the little silken gems, remarking that, "There was no delusion," would any lady or gentleman like to handle them?

Well, all passed off cheerily enough, and I returned home the following morning. At the station I bought a local paper, and, glancing at the account of the doings of the previous evening, to my indignation I read a letter from a local parson, which ran thus: "Anything more ungentlemanly than the way in which he (that's Astley) spoke of, and displayed his luggage, I never heard, and considering that quite half his audience were ladies, he might have spared us that part of his speech. For my own part—having a lady with me—the only thing to do was to leave the hall at once."

Poor dear innocent "Sky Pilot"! I fancy he has long since (if alive) rued the composition of that ridiculous letter. I bided my time, for you may depend I was not going to let him have it all his own way. As he had not only treated me, but also my "luggage," with contempt; so, on the last day of the old year, I invested in a wire arrangement, more needed by thin than stout ladies, and, enclosing it in a neat little parcel, sent it off with

the following note: "*Rev. Sir—On the advent of a new year I send you a modest tenpenny improver, and as Old England is up to now a free country, I would suggest that my New Year's gift be adjusted to any part of your lady's person that you may think deficient in outline, and hope it will give you satisfaction. You will oblige me by not displaying this fancy luggage before any of your male acquaintances, for fear their sensitive ideas of decorum may receive as rude a shock as yours did, when the vulgar 'Bart.' had the audacity to flaunt the silken garment (common to both sexes) which enveloped, though it did not impede, the useful machinery which enabled him to win four cups at Aldershot one afternoon in 1856, after similar triumphs in the Crimea.—Yours, The Proud Possessor of the afore-mentioned Luggage.*"

Rather a pretty effusion I reckoned it, and worthy, I thought, of the perusal of some of his parishioners, who had doubtless read his letter, but would very likely imagine that the "Bart." had taken a licking (as we put it at Eton) and hadn't the nerve to answer their pastor's hyperbole (that's a good word, ain't it?). So I asked my friend, John Corlett, if he thought well, to insert the incident in the *Pink 'Un*, and to send me 50 copies. When I received them I sent 40 to the

care of a friend, to be judiciously distributed in the parish, which was done, and created considerable amusement amongst that section of my old constituents. There I imagined the matter would end, but the following February I met one of the congregation in the train, and he informed me with considerable glee that "on St. Valentine's Day some choice spirits had bought a stuffed canary, and had sent it, with their compliments, to the parson, hoping that he would put the little dicky bird in that pretty wire cage that Sir John was so kind as to send him on New Year's Day." Whether the suggestion was acted on I never heard; but I fancy the "Bart." had ample revenge on the priest, and if I had been he I should have carried out their hint, and hung the improver, with the songster therein, in my front window.

CHAPTER XV.

A Little Bit about my Old Regiment—How I Evaded the Authorities and got on Board the Troopship—"Curly" Knox in Command—"The Girls We Left Behind Us"—Stamping Letters—Fresh Trouble in Egypt in 1884—The 2nd Battalion Ordered Out—My son, Frank, one of the Number—Go down to Gravesend to see him off—1st of February, 1885—Not so Cheery a Time as before—"All's Well that Ends Well"—A near Shave for my Lad—Capt. A. Fitzgeorge—Scotland and my Visits there—A Few Words about Grouse-driving—My First Day with the Grouse—Ganochy and Beaufort—My First Stalk at Beaufort—Hard Work—Grouse-driving with Henry Saville, Duke of Beaufort—Jim Macdonald and Sterling Crawford—At Longshaw with De la Rue and W. Morris—A Funny Accident—The Perpetrator of the Deed makes Amends—Sport at Danby—Sport at Brodick in the Island of Arran—A Charming Place—"Born too Soon"—The "Duck" and I go well together—Little Lady Mary and her Grace, both too Nimble for the "Old 'Un"—A Few Words on Stalking in Arran—Kindness of many Friends towards an "Old 'Un" when Shooting—Sandringham—Harry Keppel.

I THINK I ought to touch now a little bit on the doings of my old regiment. England had been some thirty years clear of war's alarms when the state of Egypt rendered it imperative that she should look after and protect the direct waterway to her vast possessions in the East. The first

move necessarily was with the Navy, and some of our great iron tubs were ordered in July, 1882, to roll up alongside Alexandria,* and pitch a few hundred tons of iron into the forts (so called) of that miserable town. At the same time some soldiers were sent out to help the Khedive and his native troops to catch and punish Arabi Pasha. The 1st Battalion of Scots Guards paraded in Wellington Barracks at 7 A.M. on Sunday, July 30th, 1882, and I had made up my mind that I would see the last of them before they quitted the Thames; so, shortly before they marched off, I hurried out of barracks, and got to the steps on Westminster Bridge, whence they were to be conveyed in three small river steamers to that splendid sea-going boat, *The Orient*, which was lying alongside the Albert Docks.

On arrival at the steps I was politely informed by the police that no civilian—unless on business—was allowed to go on board even the small steamers. I tried to coax the friendly “bobbies” to let me pass, but no go, and as I was on the point of giving it up as a bad job, I espied a newspaper vendor with a bundle of *Observers* under his arm. I quickly bought his little lot, and again

* The Fleet was under the command of Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour (now Lord Alcester).

approaching the steps, explained to the "bobbies" that I was commissioned to take charge of the literature under my arm, and convey it on board for the use of the officers. They then reluctantly allowed me to descend the steps, and I quickly stowed myself out of sight in one of the steamers. Presently I heard the strains of the band playing that well-known and to soldiers, much appreciated, melody, "The girls we left behind us." It seemed to me that the very same men must be playing as when, near thirty years previously, we marched to Nine Elms to embark for the Crimea, and I almost felt as if I was a "wrong 'un" not to be going out, too. Well, the men soon came clattering down the steps, and as soon as the well-laden boat was cast adrift I emerged from my hiding-place, much to the astonishment of the commanding officer, Colonel Knox ("Curly" for short), and offered my newspapers to my old comrades.

We glided down the stream and chatted merrily till we arrived at the Docks, where the huge *Orient* was to be seen towering above us. All disembarked and wended their way to the companion ladder of the big ship, and, though I had got nicely in amongst the rank and file, a ruthless marine angrily stopped my further passage, and by no mode of expostulation, oily or bluff, could I work

upon his feelings. I sat down disconsolately upon some baulks of timber, and was beginning to think what a fool I was not to have come down on poor Jim Farquharson's private steamer, when I was roused by a splendidly got up and consequential official shouting to me, "What are you doing here, sir? No civilians allowed here, sir." With a dash of importance, I replied, "Waiting to go on board, sir." He rejoined, "I can't have you here. Go on board at once, sir," and with a smile of defiance I approached the hard-hearted marine, saying, "You hear what the officer says, get out of the road," and up I skipped and dived down to one of the officer's cabins at once, and didn't emerge till I felt the powerful screw churning the water in the basin. Then out I came, and one of the ship's officers offered me some breakfast. Well, you can bet I was keen for a bite, and set to with a will. We were soon out on the bosom of old "Father Thames," and the deck became alive with soldiers, officers, and men, who had now stowed away their baggage and put on their ocean kit, and as we looked over the side, we were soon chaffing the occupants of Farquharson's little steamer on one hand, and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales' boat on the other, for he had brought down his brother the Duke of Connaught, who was also bound for the East.

Presently the signal was given for all those who hadn't business at Malta to leave the *Orient*, and I was left the only civilian on board, except one of the joint-owners of the ship, who had promised to give me a passage back from the Nore in his steam-launch. It was curious to watch how our big ship, with the screw going about twenty revolutions a minute, left the small steamers—who were doing all they knew to keep up with us—far behind, and soon afterwards they turned back, while we dropped down to the Nore, where, as the tide did not serve, the anchor was let go, and the huge ship swung round, waiting till the incoming tide would enable her to continue her voyage. My friend's little launch not appearing, he hailed a tug, and after taking leave of the old regiment and imbibing several parting glasses, we descended the ladder, and the tug landed us at Gravesend. I arrived at the Turf Club about 11.30 P.M., to the surprise of those who had last seen me on the *Orient*, they having settled that I should be carried on to Malta.

I had been intrusted with some fifty letters, which I was enjoined to post that night, and told not to be too inquisitive as to some of the addresses of the younger ones' epistles, but, like a good fellow, to stamp those that needed it. Though sorely tired, I

set to and stamped all the letters that required it ; still, I could not help being reminded by not a few of the superscriptions of the good old tune the band had selected in the morning. I was a bit tricky and lucky in carrying out my resolve to see the last of the battalion that Sunday, and I could have had any odds I didn't bring it off, and don't believe I have seen the picture of any other man that could have done it. Modest way of putting it, eh ! The battalion returned home the following November, having done its duty well, and left Egypt in a comparatively peaceful state ; but in 1884 an old fool called the Mahdi (whatever that may mean), having sprung up and unduly excited a large number of dervishes, misguided Arabs, and others, England found herself again compelled to send out troops to Suakim. This time the 2nd Battalion of Scots Guards was for duty, and one of the officers who went out with them was my son Frank, to whom I introduced you on his birth at Rome in 1859. He had (after leaving Eton) joined my old regiment about 1879, and in June, 1882, married Lady Gertrude Pelham, a charming little woman, only sister of our neighbour, the present Lord Yarborough ; and in 1884 my first grandchild made his appearance. A smarter boy than Jack (now ten years old) I never set eye on, nor have you !

My son was attached to the Mounted Infantry, which consisted of some fifty men of each battalion of Guards, and some few days before that fixed for embarkation, I bought and distributed amongst the men detailed for that duty, a haversack, a pound of 'baccy, and a pipe each, and as I distributed these little presents among them, I told the men to keep their eye on "young Astley," and bring him back safe.

Well, the battalion paraded at Wellington Barracks (as the first had done) on the 21st February, 1885, and this time were taken down in small steamers to Gravesend, where they embarked on board the *Pembroke Castle*. I escorted my wife and daughter-in-law by train to see the last of Frank on board. Not half so cheery an event did I feel it as the start of the other battalion three years before ; and, of course, it was a real trying time for the wives of many of the officers who embarked that day. But they, one and all, held up bravely, and were all rewarded by welcoming home their husbands again in the following July, when the battalion returned. My lad had a very narrow squeak for life, for, though he had never been sick or sorry during the short campaign, no sooner had he embarked at Suakim to accompany the battalion to Alexandria, than he was struck down by fever ; and, had it not been that he,

fortunately, was put on board a return transport, where only a few sick were placed, and therefore had the advantage of extra careful nursing, together with the kind attention of the commander, A. Fitz-George, he would never have reached home. As it was, I never spent a more uncomfortable week than waiting at Southsea with his little wife for his return. The old tub he was on board of was several days overdue, and when at last it arrived, though rejoiced to find Frank alive, he was terribly weak, and we got leave to take him in a gunboat straight to Netley Hospital (a first-class institution), where he soon picked up, and don't look any the worse ; but it was a near shave, very.

Having harked back a little to relate the doings of my old regiment in Egypt, and said a word or two about my son Frank, I must get forward again ; for doing so has taken us back as far as 1882, and as a retrograde movement will not tend to finish this book any the quicker, I will at once proceed to another variety of sport, and one to which I have not hitherto alluded.

I have touched but little on the many enjoyable visits I have paid in Scotland, and, to tell the truth, when I took so vigorously to horse-racing I hardly ever found time to go North, and trusted only to the generosity of my friends to remind me of the 12th

of August, when sending me grouse. As that much beloved day drew near, I used to remind those that I knew were bound for the heather, that the present year was an extraordinary good one for bread sauce at Elsham, but that it was a very moderate dish by itself, although it went wonderful well with grouse—and I found the gentle hint very productive, one year having had as many as forty brace of grouse sent me. My first introduction to the moors was as a lad of sixteen, when, armed with a single-barrelled gun, and one pointer, I killed nineteen brace of grouse in Kincardineshire. When I grew into an Ensign I spent many a pleasant week with various friends in the Highlands, always shooting over dogs. Amongst those places where I enjoyed myself most may be numbered Ganochy with Billy Peareth, and with Lord Lovat, at Beaufort (the grandfather of the present man).

At Beaufort I was first initiated into the art of deer-stalking, and real hard work it was, for we—the party consisting of the old lord, his son Simon, the Master of Lovat, a wonderful hard and keen stalker, and Alistair Frazer (a great chum of mine in the regiment)—used to go up to a lodge in the forest. I was turned out at 6 A.M., and had to walk about six miles along some Highland road, and then ascend some awful hill, and direct my wanderings

according to the wind, so as not to drive the deer over the march ; in fact, it was quite on the cards that after a two hours' struggle up hill, my stalker would insist on our descending by the same route : and then we had to climb up again to another ridge to spy some other ground ; perhaps we might get a shot, but it was no certainty. Often have I had to return, tired to death, without having had half a chance, maybe without having seen a beast worth stalking, and after wiring into a leg of mutton and rice-pudding, turned into a very hard, but, to a tired sportsman, a welcome bed.

I have done but little grouse-driving. My first attempt was at Rhysworth, belonging to the late Henry Savile of Rufford, where, beside whom were the Duke of Beaufort, Jim Macdonald, and Sterling Crawford, a quartette of good sportsmen and good fellows not to be beat, the Duke being the only one left. I wish they were all buzzing about now. On another occasion I was lucky enough to be asked to shoot at Longshaw (the Duke of Rutland's) when Warren De la Rue and W. Morris rented it, and here I met with quite a funny accident. I had been warned by his nephew, that old Morris was a trifle dangerous, and (like my luck) in drawing lots for places I found myself next to him. But all went well on the first day till after luncheon, when,

as the butts were somewhat closer together, I bid my loader build up the sides of my hiding-place, which was on the right of Wicked Bill (W. Morris's pet name), a bit higher as a precaution, and presently a large pack of grouse came sailing along between our two butts. I let go two shots in front and then snatched up my second gun, and turned round to have another two shots when they had passed me (alas! I can't turn on my own axis as nattily as I used to): so swinging round, I took a pace to the rear and so got out of my hide, of which the old boy took prompt advantage, and tickled me up freely, putting a couple of pellets into my right cheek, and, as I told him afterwards, he nailed me just as if I was a buck rabbit popping his head out of a hole. However, I was none the worse; in fact, all the better, for he asked me to his first-rate shooting at Wrotham in Norfolk, which I don't think he would have done had he not wished to make the *amende honorable*, and in writing to accept his invite I told him he might have another shot at me, but I must name the spot.

Twice I have had some driving on a capital little moor near Northallerton, and Black Hambledon, leased with others by a neighbour of ours in Lincolnshire named Cliff, a keen sportsman. This year I (1893) shot at Danby (Lord Downe's)

rented by A. Soames, who did us right well. Armstrong, the head-keeper, is a very quaint and clever old party. But of all the places where grouse and deer do congregate, commend me to Arran, the loveliest of islands, owned in its entirety by the best of good fellows, the Duke of Hamilton, "bless him!" Deary me! how I have enjoyed myself there! Would that I were younger and more lissom: for it is terribly annoying to see a real steady good dog drawing up hill, and, though you know, and would bet 40 to 1, that grouse are running in front of that never-mistaken "dorg," yet your bellows and wooden old legs often prevent your rewarding the intelligent animal by getting within range of the birds when they rise.

Again, much the same acute sensations afflict you when, after a couple of hours' feeble efforts at climbing some steep hill-side, you sit down and spy, and find a real good stag gradually feeding away from you, and perhaps realise that the beast will very soon reach difficult ground for you to get within range of him; though, if you could run a few hundred yards, you might get up to some cover, where you would be cock-sure to get a fair shot, but, though keen as mustard, the machinery is too antiquated to carry out the movement, and the opportunity is lost. Yet, with the indisputable

fact that you were "born too soon" constantly recurring to your mind, and each year more pointedly, I would sooner spend a month in Arran than in any place I have ever known. Those of my readers who have not been there, hurry up and see for yourselves. You will find pleasant quarters at the hotel at Brodick, kept by Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald, whose chief delight seems to be to make their visitors comfortable. The first time I went to Arran, the Duke and Duchess were entertaining a party at Brodick Castle, and I then made the acquaintance of their little daughter, Lady Mary, a most lovable and pretty child. We soon became great friends, and when picking blackberries I could fairly keep up with her; but when invited to take a ride I was soon left in the lurch, and I am afraid lost caste in her young estimation.

The same want of youthful dash stood in my way when the Duchess wanted to show me the beautiful gorge of Glen Rosa; but that didn't humble me so much, for she is the best mover I ever beheld—she just *can* walk, her easy swing is the poetry of motion. Now, the "Duck" (as I call his Grace) is more my style, as he is terribly handicapped with the gout, and I don't feel so cruel old when brushing the heather with him. That year he and I drove over to the shooting-lodge the other side of

the island, a matter of some twelve miles, taking our guns with us, and when we had driven about eight miles we found the keepers and gillies and three brace of dogs waiting for us. We got off the trap and shouldered our guns, while a brace of dogs were let go, and away they dashed—delighted to get out of the couples—over the heather; but had not gone twenty yards before they were suddenly brought up all of a heap, and stood in most perfect form; and as we walked up I saw nine heads peeping out of the heather. In another second up got nine grouse and down came four of them. “How many are there now, and where are they gone?” asked the Duke. “Five, and no that far away, yer Grace,” said old Mackenzie. And, sure enough, when we had got round a small knoll there were the five heads. Up the birds got and down came three, and the same question brought the intelligence that there were “just twa.” They also rose and met the same doom—father, mother, and seven bairns were duly accounted for.

It did tickle me. I could not help having a hearty laugh at the tameness of these birds, for, as the old keeper expressed it, “they were vara accommodating.” I believe we ought to have left the last two, in order that their pretty manners might be handed down to their progeny; but we didn’t think

of that in time. Grouse do certainly lie better in Arran than any place I have ever shot over. It may be because there is no driving, all the birds being killed over dogs, and rare fun it is ; for I must say I like seeing the dogs work. I am but a poor shot with the rifle ; nevertheless, I do thoroughly enjoy deer-stalking in Arran ; the wind there is never wrong, for you cannot put the deer over the march into your neighbour's forest.

What, in this vale of tears, can be more enjoyable than after a nine-o'clock breakfast, cooked by a first-class *chef*, each guest gets his orders, either to go stalking or shoot. Two start off in an Irish car some few miles, to where the keepers and dogs are waiting for them, to shoot ; off go two other cars, with a guest, stalker, and gillie in each, to their different grounds ; and, lastly, the "old 'un" (that's me) is told he can go where he likes. Either on foot or on a real confidential Iceland pony (my favourite is a white one that I christened Snowball), and attended by Peter Crawford—a dear old wiry Scot, who knows every yard of the island—and a gillie, I start as if I could hurry up the steepest of hills. But, oh dear ! before I have been two hours on the trudge, that horrible truism asserts itself, "Born too soon," and I persuade the trusty Peter that I fancy I see a real big beast on yonder face, with

my race-glasses. Then down we sit, and Peter, pulling out his telescope, after a searching spy, shakes his head and says: "Yon is only a wee staggy, with two or three hinds." But I have had a rest; and, maybe, if the day is very warm, just a sketch of whisky with water from the burn, or I may have to touch one of my bottles of "soddy"; for I make it a rule to balance the gillie with two or three bottles of "aërated" in case good water is not handy when thirst is. Refreshed, I up and plod on again, and the next time Peter's telescope is required to verify the indistinct glimpse of my glasses, a bonnie beast is spied, and this time (wind being right) a cigar is lighted and a council of ways and means solemnly held.

Personally, I don't object to lying where we are, if the heather is dry and soft, till the antlered monarch has fed or moved on out of sight, and we can then advance without fear of being seen; but, if he is lying down with his hinds around him, we may have to retrace our steps and advance from another quarter. I always vote for trying any method of approach rather than progression by "crarling." I don't think I am built the right way for this style of advance; no doubt your head ought to be the highest part of your person, when on all fours, but I cannot truthfully assert that mine is.

I am naturally inclined to do the ostrich trick, which bird (I am told) when frightened buries its head in the sand, thinking, I presume, that if it cannot see it cannot be seen. Well! when I want to make myself invisible by "crarling," I am told I carry my head too low and my—body—too high. So if the stag would crawl away on his knees and hocks, then I might compete on my hands and knees; but, keep on my feet I will, if I can.

After a careful scramble the supreme moment at length arrives. For some minutes Peter has taken to whispering—a sure sign he believes that, when we next sight our quarry, I shall be near enough to get a shot. Now the two cartridges are slipped into the rifle, and, panting and breathless, I grasp the weapon and peep with extreme caution through the heather that fringes the top of the knoll that screens us from the stag. Ah! there he is, a grand beast lying facing us, as yet totally unconscious of his danger; at the same time one of his harem looks a little uneasy, and, rising, taps the ground with one of her forefeet. "Now, be ready and steady, old boy," says I to myself, my heart beating with excitement so loudly that I am almost afraid the stag will hear it, and jump up and be off endways on, before I can get a bead on him; up gets another hind, and the Sultan, having faith in their joint

sagacity, rises defiantly from his lair—in another instant he and his girls will be off. There! now he stands for a second broadside on; “Let him have it” I mutter to myself, and bang, whizz goes the bullet. I hear it hit something, but is it the stag? Oh, it *must* be, the sight and his heart were in a line when I pulled. Confound it, he’s off!

I let go the other barrel and see the bullet chuck up the dirt to his right; “Keep your eye on him, Peter, I couldn’t have missed him: he was such a pretty shot—not one hundred yards off.” “But you have ‘mussed’ him, Sir John, and you couldna have had a prettier shot.” To which I rejoined: “You be sugared, old boy! Look yonder: he can’t keep up with the hinds—ah! he reels, he’s down!” Peter admitted that he was struck, and said, “Ah! you’ve hit him sairly.” Then with my glasses I try to find the wound, and, sure enough, the bullet is into his side, but a few inches too far back. We make a slight detour, and I give him another barrel from close quarters, and the bonny beast turns over, while Peter, running up, gives him the *coup de grâce*; but before the last obsequies I bid the gillie pull out a bottle of “soddy,” and with a dash of whisky we each drink to the success of our stalk, and agree that he must be near twenty stone.

The gillie, leaving the lunch with us, is sent off to get the sleigh, so as to get the beast home at once. Peter and I make off to the nearest spring and just about enjoy our lunch, the lovely view over the sea to the mainland, and a good draw at our tobacco, and by evening—when we got home—after another stalk and a miss, we find the stag already hung up in the larder. He weighs 20 st. 6 lbs. clean, but his head is hardly up to his weight; yet it will take some beating, and the “Duck” coming in from his day’s cruise on the *Thistle*, orders the head to be set up in Glasgow, and it now adorns the Hall at Elsham. Well, I say, what can be more delicious than such a day as I have described. Oh! it’s glorious, and so think the others who have now returned, maybe each having killed a stag, while the shooters bring a nice bag of grouse and a few black game. And after a good tubbing we all fall to and do justice to the happy efforts of the *chef* and the best of “pop”; then with a cigar and a taste of whisky and soda, each recounts his day’s sport, and all tumble into bed and recruit our weary limbs.

If the day is so wet, or a mist hangs on the hills, rendering stalking out of the question, we used generally to spend the morning in the boat-house, a luxurious building on the shore; some

wrote letters, others took a turn at the lathe, or tend to the behest of Lady Polly. After luncheon we scatter to different cornfields along the seashore, and either wait behind the stone walls, or get into little huts built of wood-scantling, and covered with shocks of oats, and watch for the flight of black game that come in to feed between three and five. Not half bad fun either! Sometimes with patience you may get two old blackcock in a line, feeding on the oat-stooks, and knock them over at a shot; or maybe one falls, and you get the other when rising, with your second barrel, and you have not long to wait before another crowd come in to feed.

In one of these cornfields, from my hide, I once counted fifteen grouse, twelve partridges, six black game and some grey hens, five or six wood-pigeons, two rabbits, a small stag, and three hinds, all feeding within one hundred yards of me; and whilst smoking my cigar I waited patiently till the blackcock came up and drove the grouse off the oat-stooks within shot; then I blazed both barrels, and got a brace. As I didn't show myself, the happy family, though all much agitated, could not make out whence the sound came; so, loading again, I brownd into the partridges and got six.

As I said before, give me Arran, there is no

possession like it ; and, though I suppose the Garden of Eden before Eve meddled with the apple, was a long way in front of Hurlingham, Ranelagh, the Sweet Waters of Asia, or even Kensington Gardens, yet it could not in my imagination compare with the Isle of Arran for beautiful scenery. I have never had so much shooting as during the last six years, and the only pull I have yet discovered in getting old is that, generally, the elderly party has the best of places assigned him, and I verily believe I enjoy a good day's shooting as much or more than I ever did. The worst of the sport is the expense attending it. To a man of slender income four days of heavy shooting means, at the very least, the extermination of a tenner, and more often two tenners evaporate by the time you get home. Of course, if your host won't allow you to send for any more cartridges than you bring, but magnanimously provides them for you, you may do it a bit cheaper.

At Easton one year I fired away 1500 cartridges in the first two days ; fortunately for me, one of the party went wrong, as his head could not stand the heavy shooting, and, as I have generally an eye to the main chance, I gently hinted that it might not be worth his while to lug his remaining cartridges up to London, and, like a real good fellow, he

bid his servant hand them over to my loader. That's as it should be, ain't it? This past season (1893) I have had on two or three occasions my cartridges supplied by my host, in the same way that he finds me victuals and drink—a grand idea, and much to be encouraged by those of small means.

This last season I had nine extraordinary good day's sport, three days in each of three consecutive weeks, and in those nine days 10,160 pheasants fell to the gun, out of a total of 15,510 head. These were at Gunton (E. M. Mundy's), Easton (Duke of Hamilton's), and Sudbourne (A. Heywood's); and we were fortunate in not having a wet day amongst them, and, mind you, the best of everything, not only at dinner but at luncheon as well; while last, but a long way not least, the very pleasantest of ladies' society. I ask you, when do the fair sex look more bewitching, than they do after a walk or drive to the luncheon tent, when, with the ruddy colour produced by exercise (not by the puff or brush), they welcome you to the midday meal, and, that over, accompany the guns for an hour or so in the afternoon, and, when standing by your side, congratulate you if you are in good form, and mildly chaff you if you are muffing your *gibier*. It is on these occasions that the well-turned-out walking-costume, with skirt short enough to prevent its

dragging in the mud, treats you to a glimpse of the well-turned ankle and arched instep, and, perchance, the well-developed limb that keeps the stockings from wrinkling, especially if there be a muddy gateway or slippery bank and ditch to be negotiated. I don't mention a stile, because, of course, you get over first and look before you till "she" is fairly over; but I have known cases when, in their eagerness to follow the gun, stout ladies have required assistance—in one case in particular I was rendered quite timid.

I had been told by my host to get through or over a treble wire fence into the park from a shrubbery, and I at once, with some difficulty, scraped through between the wires, when my fair companion (one of the very best) essayed to follow me, and I strolled on while she made the attempt to coax her garments through the narrow aperture, but was roused from my reverie by a shrill voice of agony imploring me to help, as she could neither get backwards or forwards. Of course I put down my gun and rushed to the fair one's assistance, and, taking a firm grip of what *I believed* to be the tailor-made skirt, I, with considerable effort, landed its possessor in the field; but, instead of grateful thanks, I dropped in for an awful wiggling: "How dare you! Only my husband would be allowed to do

that, &c. &c.," and it was not till I explained to the lady that, unless I had rescued her, she would have been a fixture in all probability, and brought in the next morning with the "pick-up," that she burst out laughing and forgave me straight off. Of course I ought to have been more particular in selecting the substance that I grasped.

I must now leave the ladies, pretty dears! and try to convey my heartfelt thanks to those many kind friends who, year after year, are noble enough to ask me to their best shooting; and when it is taken into consideration that very often I am the oldest man of the party, and, not unfrequently, the worst shot of the lot, to say nothing of at times requiring a pony to enable me to keep up with the other guns; doubtless I must be a considerable nuisance, and be taking the place of a better man. Then, last, but not least, I have no shooting to offer them in return, and I say with these undoubted and increasing drawbacks, it is really very pretty of them to accord me a hearty welcome, and belittle my shortcomings, as they invariably do. It speaks volumes in favour of owners and lessees of prime shooting when they stick to, not only an "old 'un," but a "broker" as well. "Bless 'em, all round," say I; though to particularise any would be invidious, and I don't know

where I could begin where all are of the "first water"; but one thing I will say: that I never enjoyed a prettier two days' shooting than the last week of the old year (1893), when H.R.H. was good enough to bid me visit him at Sandringham, and if he ain't a downright kind host, then I'll give up guessing. Dear old Sir Harry Keppel was there, too, and though a good bit past eighty, he is as playful as a kitten; in fact, though he is Admiral of the Fleet, I can't help calling him "Middy," and one of the prettiest compliments I ever heard paid to a brave man was, when the most adored and admirable of her sex asked him one day: "Do you know, Sir Harry, why we call our youngest daughter 'little Harry'?" and, on his giving it up, she said: "Because she is devoid of fear."

One of Sir Harry's very funny stories tickled me much. A bluejacket had been a long time afloat, and on getting leave one day to go ashore, he took a stroll in a beautiful emerald-green meadow, and, whilst gloating over the lovely (ten times lovelier to him who had been so long on the briny) expanse of grass and wild flowers, he suddenly became aware that a bull, with his head down and mischief in his eye, was charging straight for him. Jack stood his ground, and sang out at the top of his voice: "Bull ahoy! lower your mizzen, and put yer helm hard

aport, or you'll be aboard of me!" Bull took no notice, but promptly knocked poor Jack end over end—fortunately without doing any great harm; and when the man-of-war's-man rose to his feet again, he calmly, but with considerable pride at having been correct in his theory of navigation, halloed out to the retiring beast: "There! I told you so, you great landlubber!" and with that withering remark he left the contemptible brute to his own reflections. But, to thoroughly enjoy this story, you should hear Sir Harry tell it; he just "do put it pretty," I can assure you, and many others of the same kidney.

CHAPTER XVI.

Watches that I have "Loved and Lost"—Some for good and all—A Tussle at Epsom—King Street, Covent Garden—A Family Relic—Egham Races—Nat Langham—A Tip for Marking Umbrellas—Mine Borrowed at Ascot—Ananias not in it—Newmarket—A Night at the Barn Club—Buy Jumpers—Good Advice—I Buy, or rather my Broker does—Two Sorts of "Brokers"—The Professional and otherwise—Jumpers Rise—So do my Spirits—My two Sons, Jerry and Jack—Good and Bad Business—No Good to be done in England—Often Eight Hours a Day for Ten Shillings a Week—Not a Living Wage—The Present Army Examination—Why more Necessary than Formerly—A Few Words on the Subject.

I MUST now tell you the story of my watch being borrowed, without my leave, at the Epsom Spring Meeting, in April, 1887. You must know I rather pride myself on my gold watch, made by Barraud and Lund, of Cornhill, for it is a wonderful bit of mechanism, and keeps extraordinary time, and as, in the present state of my finances, I could not replace it, I ought to be more cautious as to the company I wear it in. Well, on the City and Surburban day, after an excellent luncheon at the booth, I was strolling down to the paddock to have a look at the horses, as I have done for very many years, when I

want to satisfy myself as to their condition and general appearance (though, mind you, it didn't do me much good when I cast my critical eye over the wretched-looking Hermit, just before he won the Derby). However, I felt contented with all men, and never gave a thought to the safety of my ticker, not even buttoning my coat over my waistcoat; when, all of a sudden, just as I had crossed the tan-covered road, and was not more than fifty yards from the entrance to the paddock, three or four men, pretending to be larking with each other, crossed in front of me, and, to my indignation, two of them ran right up against me. I up with my clenched fists and asked them where they were coming to, and whilst my arms were thus upraised, one of them abstracted my watch from my waistcoat-pocket and twisted the bow off. I never felt him do it, but I *did* feel my watch-chain flap against my tummy, and, looking down, at once realised that my timekeeper was gone.

I made a lunge at the ruffian nearest me, but he darted away, and I after him; fortunately he ran into the arms of a good chap, Mason, who held him till I got up and gripped him by the collar, and was in the act of giving him a good shaking and ordering him to give me back my watch, when, with an amount of acuteness I am proud of, I observed a

hand from behind me put forward to meet the paw of the party I had hold of, and, seeing the strange hand closed tightly, I instantly made up my mind the digits would not shut up so quickly unless there was something inside them ; so, dropping the first thief, I turned round and made a grab at number two. But he wriggled off like an eel, and I should never have got up to him, had he not stooped to slip under the chains that guard the course, and as he ducked for that purpose, I caught him one in the small of the back, sending him sprawling on his stomach, and before he could rise I was on top of him ; then, putting a knee each side of him, I turned him over on his back, and with my right hand secured a good hold of his neck, while with my left I seized his right hand, which was so firmly clasped that I made sure my watch was in it.

He sang out, and when I thumped his head against the turf and bid him keep still and give up my watch, he shrieked : “ I ain’t got yer blooming watch, gov’nor ! Didn’t you see me help you ketch the man as took it ? &c. &c.” I, with more knowledge of the mechanism of the human frame than most men possess (when in a hurry), raised my right knee and pressed it on his stomach, and at once established the fact of the sensitive sympathy existing (unknown to most of the faculty, but which I

offer to them free, gratis, for confirmation) between the bread-basket of the *genus homo* and the digital organs which convey the bread to the small aperture leading to the store-room; or, to put it more plainly, the pressure I contrived to bring to bear on his stomach became so painful that the thief sung out, "Oh don't, gov'nor! There's yer watch, I picked it off the grass." As his hand opened, I seized my ticker and put it in a safe receptacle; but, would you believe it? all this time not a man lent me a helping hand! Wonderful lucky they didn't help the thief, I thought; and, as the man tried to wrench himself clear, I was obliged to give him a tap between the eyes to keep him quiet. At last a full-blown "bobby" came up, swelling with importance, and with sparkling intelligence asked, "What was up?"

I am afraid I was a little rough on him and his *confrères*, and bid him get another to help him take the gentleman I was in charge of to the lock-up, and this he was man enough to bring off. So I followed and charged the culprit, and was told to attend the police-court at Epsom the next morning, which I did, you may be sure, particularly as the Superintendent of Police had charge of my watch. I narrated the facts to the Bench, and the benevolent old Chairman had the audacity to read me a lesson

about taking the law into my own hands—good idea forsooth! He might as well have bid me give the thief another watch, and stand him a drink!—and when I explained that had I not been nippy, my watch would have been ticking in another man's pocket by now, the G.O.M. pointed to the prisoner's optics (sure enough they were, "Two lovely black eyes") and chided me for so painting him. But on my telling him the man was inclined to be obstreperous, and some wag remarking that "I doubtless put a private mark on the thief, so that I might know him again," the worthy beak sentenced the culprit to "three months' hard," and the Superintendent returned my watch, none the worse, excepting the loss of the bow. The police were very complimentary to me afterwards, and one of considerable rank assured me that, he had never known of a watch being recovered that had once been passed from the snatcher to his confederate. No doubt it was an extraordinary bit of luck my noticing that transfer from one to the other, the while I was busily employed shaking the party that borrowed it. I was told afterwards that this thief was sentenced soon after he came out of prison, to penal servitude for burglary.

This same watch had another narrow escape of losing its fond master when I was returning

from an exhibition of the art of self-defence at a well-conducted club in King Street, Covent Garden. It was a very cold, frosty night, and I buttoned my fur coat over my evening dress, and adopted the short-sighted policy of saving my cab-hire by walking home; but, as it turned out, I was doing the "penny wise and pound foolish" trick, for I hadn't proceeded far along that badly lighted street, King Street, Covent Garden, before I was asked for the ten thousandth time to stand a poor old pugilist a bob to get a night's lodging—in plain English, to unbutton my coat and give the party a chance of fingering my watch. On my resolutely refusing, and hugging the area railings, so that I should only leave one side open to attack, a miscreant shoved up from behind between me and the railings, causing me to raise my arms for eventualities, when another man ripped my coat open, pulling one button right off, and made a grab at my watch-chain, giving it such a jerk that I felt sure my watch was gone. I let go at the thief—who bolted across the street—and slipping on the frosty roadway he came down; but before I could stoop to secure him, he was up and off again, and I after him; but he soon got into the dark shadows of the Market House, and I gave up the chase, blowing like a grampus.

In the last depths of despair, I thought I would ascertain how much of the chain he had left me, feeling quite satisfied that my faithful companion was this time gone for good, when, to my unbounded delight and surprise, I found my watch was still in my pocket. So I hailed a hansom at once, and drove to my club, where I discovered that my well-worn waistcoat had balked the thief, for the violent jerk he gave my chain tore the pocket and prevented my watch slipping out, as it would have done to a certainty had I been clothed in my Sunday best. Deary me! I have seldom felt more relieved and thankful, and was obliged to order a B. and S. to celebrate my faithful ticker's second escape from perdition. Now I am content to pay for a ride home, instead of walking, being convinced it's the cheapest mode of locomotion in the long run, when East of Leicester Square at night.

I fear I may weary my readers somewhat *re* my present watch's escapes, but, though up to now that identical ticker has always come home to tea, yet I am obliged to admit I was eased of two moderate timekeepers before I arrived at my best (that is this side of fifty). In both instances I never missed my property till some time after they had left my pocket; so that no effort of genius or biceps on my part could recall them.

The first that quitted my person unawares was during an exciting 10-mile foot-race at Copenhagen Fields (now the site of the large cattle-market) when I was backing "Ducky" Grantham against Levett, and I have already related this episode in the previous volume.

Having replaced that departed watch with an old gold one that had been in the family for some time, I one day attended Egham races—then a pleasant day's out—on the famous Runnymede, and either on my way to, or return from luncheon on a coach, the family one was appropriated, and I didn't miss it till some ribald friend roguishly asked me the time of day. Of course, when I, with finished politeness, felt for my ticker it was absent, my chain was hanging loose, and I was subjected subsequently to much badinage at my good nature in parting with a family relic. This time I thought I would try the quiet and confidential trick, and at once sought out my honourable friend, Nat Langham (the only man who ever licked the renowned Tom Sayers fair and square), and on telling the redoubtable one of my loss, and that I would give a fiver for it back and ask no questions, "ould Nat" went off on the quest, but shortly returned to ask me "what colour it was." I said it was a yellow (gold) one; so off he went again, and on his return,

with a comical smile on his well battered frontispiece, he thus spake: "It's a good job, capting, it's a yellow one; I think I shall be able to get it back for yer, but you would have stood no chance if it had been a white one, for they've got the best part of three bushels of them white (silver) tickers. They just have had a haul, and no mistake, and they are half-way back to London by now." But I never heard any more of it; so, as I said before, borrowed watches don't always come home to tea, even though they would receive a hearty welcome and be better cared for.

I have twice had my favourite umbrella borrowed. Once it was during a wet day at Ascot, years ago, I had carefully selected a nice place to leave my gingham in the iron stand whilst I watched a race through my glasses, and, the race over, I sought my old friend, as it was raining hard; but it was gone. Now, I must put you up to a wrinkle, if you don't know the dodge already. It was told me by a very intelligent old chum: always mark your umbrella at the end next the ferrule, not at the handle, for the thief will erase or get rid of the identifying mark (if he can see it) as quickly as he can, and then challenge you to swear to your property—though I could always swear to my umbrellas, because I cut the sticks myself, selecting some ash-plant peculiarly

curved for the handle. But if you buy an ordinary handled umbrella it is often difficult to identify them, unless marked somewhere ; so, take my tip, and mark it at the end near the ferrule.

Well! my gingham was *non est*; so I surveyed the sea of umbrellas, all fully expanded, in the ring below, and, seeing one I felt pretty sure was mine, I descended, and politely informed the party that was in possession, that he had made a mistake as he had hold of mine. He indignantly denied my claim, and stated, with unabashed effrontery, when and where he had purchased it. I fairly kept my temper ; but told him one of us must be within a few pounds of Ananias, for I would swear the umbrella he had in his hands was mine, and I meant having it, and that quickly, as I was bound for the paddock. After a few more heated expressions had passed I told him my umbrella-stick had my initials, J. D. A. marked on it ; with great triumph he at once said, "Show me your initials, sir, there are none here (thereby convincing me he had already looked for any marks worth erasing) ; there's the handle, sir, now show me your initials?" I had him on toast, and told him I would at once prove him a thief and a liar, and, seizing the handle I shut it up, and, turning up the other end, asked him whether I had not rightly described him, for there was J. D. A.,

and no mistake, deeply cut with my own knife. He, of course, was fairly *shut up*; but I *opened* my own umbrella, and left for the paddock.

On another occasion at Newmarket I was riding my cob on the Bury Hills, and had been holding my umbrella over me as it was pelting with rain. As soon as the rain ceased I put down my umbrella, and, not caring to carry it in its soaked state, I stuck it in the ground near a post, and cantered away to look at some horse or another a little distance off; but presently returning for my gingham, before going home to breakfast, I found it gone, and, casting my eagle glance around, I spied a party in seedy clothes walking down towards the town with an umbrella in his hand. So I cantered after him on the offchance, and, as I approached, I saw that he was carrying my gingham; so I asked him if he had seen anything of an umbrella stuck in the ground? But he declared he hadn't, that the one he had in his hand was his own. I asked him to let me have a look at it, and, seeing he had no chance of getting away, he handed it to me, when, cantering my good old cob (who could turn round a teacup), I belaboured the would-be thief across his shoulders with so much energy that I broke the stick over him—which annoyed me much, as I could not use it till I got another stick to put in the umbrella. The man ceased yelling

and, I fear, enjoyed my discomfiture not a little; all the same I fancy he will not meddle with strange umbrellas for a while. Of course, it rained most of that day, and I wished I had rewarded the rascal for carrying my property, instead of trying to reform his thievish disposition.

When one is short of the ready it's one's bounden duty, I consider, to try by all honest means to obtain a supply of the needful. My readers may have gathered from my racing notes that I often employed, and even now in a very small way still employ, any cash I can command in improving my dilapidated exchequer; but my only gamble in the City was a few years ago, and amused some of my friends not a little. One night when enjoying a concert at the Barn Club (an offshoot from the late Pelican, where most of the best birds do now congregate) I chanced to be sitting next a good sort, who I knew was well informed as to the ups and downs of the Gold Mines in the Transvaal, and, wishing to do me a turn, he told me confidentially that he knew of a real good spec. if I had any cash to invest; finishing up by urging me to buy "Jumpers" freely, and at once. I got a bit mixed by the word Jumpers, and told him I had long given up owning either flat or jump horses, but that I hoped to be able to pick out the winner of

the Grand National when the weights appeared ; although I didn't intend touching any jumpers till then. "No, no," said he, "I mean you must buy shares in the Jumpers Gold Mine, as I know for certain they will yield a quick return by becoming more valuable within this week, and I will wire you when to sell and realise a nice profit." "Good heavens!" I said, "it is very pretty of you wishing me to invest, but it's a ready-money job, ain't it? and that's an article I'm wonderfully short of." "Oh, that don't matter," he replied, "you won't have to post any money ; and as these shares are certain to rise, please oblige me by buying five hundred Jumpers to-morrow, early. Go down to some broker you know and simply tell him to buy for you."

"Well," I said, "I am going down to shoot in Norfolk to-morrow, and on my way to Liverpool Street Station I will call in and see a friend of mine, a good sportsman, and run him a trial ; but mind you wire me (the sooner the better) when I am to sell out." Accordingly the following morning I started off in good time for the station, and pulling up in Threadneedle Street, I dropped into the office of a good friend of mine, who did a large business. My pal was not in, but would be shortly ; so I explained to his partner what I wanted. He is

a good chap, very, but a trifle on the cautious side, and told me, of course, they would be glad to do business for me, but necessarily they would require cover. Oh, lor! I knew it.

Now, I had with me a covert coat, and I was going to shoot coverts, but *cover* I had none (and couldn't guess when I should). I had nearly made up my mind to give up Jumpers, when in came the Lion-hearted one, and I appealed to him to buy me five hundred Jumpers, assuring him there was no risk, as they were cock-sure to go up, and I should wire to be out before they came down (very much after the movement of an equine jumper). "Well," said he, "it's rather unusual for a *broker*, as you say you are, to ask a broker, as I am by profession, to buy you five hundred Jumpers; which, according to your showing, are at $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 premium. That means a risk of well over a thousand pounds if they collapse." I said they are as certain to rise as is the morning sun, so be a man, buy me some, and invest in a good lot for yourself, and blame me (such a solace I always think!) if they ain't good goods. Now I must be off for the train, what do you say?" "Well, all right, old boy, I will send out and buy you one hundred Jumpers." "Good luck to you!" said I, "and mind you sell sharp when I wire you, and send along a cheque for the balance,

for I want the ready bad." "Right you are," he replied, and off I went.

I duly arrived at my shooting-quarters, and, of course, made my friends acquainted with my venture, and on the third day's shoot, a telegram was brought to me at luncheon time: "Sell Jumpers and buy Honolulus," or some such rubbish. Not *me*, I had chanced Jumpers, but had no feeling to invest the profit. I only wanted to touch the ready; for, mind you, Jumpers were quoted in that morning's paper at 5 premium. So I wired off to my trusty friend: "Sell Jumpers sharp, and send cheque quick." The next morning, just as I was in a tangle as to how I should properly reward the keepers, loader, *et hoc genus omne*, let alone the extra thousand cartridges I had ordered at a neighbouring town, the post arrived and I handled with delight a City letter that evidently contained more than one sheet of paper, and, to the amazement of my companions at the breakfast-table, executed a *pas seul* round the room, and with reason, for my tangle was over, and a cheque for £50 made me feel extraordinary rich. My word! how I doted on "Jumpers"—good old "Jumpers"! I hurried off a line of thanks to my kind informant, and another to my good-natured broker, and, as yet, have never risked another

fraction on any good City spec., or coaxed a City man to stand me cover. Need I say, Jumpers fell, and have never "jumped" so well since.

Those gold mines around Johannesburg are very difficult to understand. I never took any interest in them until three years ago, when my second son, "Jerry," was offered a billet in the New Primrose Company, and as he was keen to work at something, and I heard it was a splendid climate, I bought him a kit and went down with him to Dartmouth, whence I saw him off to the Cape, and he has never rued the day he went out, but writes constantly home in the best of spirits. He gets something under four hundred a year, with a good prospect of doubling it—more than he could have earned in this country by a very long way; and, with luck and health, may be a rich man by the time he is thirty (he is twenty-two now). There is no mistake about the climate being very healthy, and the only drawback I can discover, seems to be the dust-storms, which in the dry weather are often very annoying.

It is wonderful with what rapidity (six years) Johannesburg has grown into a large city. In maps of ten years ago you cannot find the site of it marked. Now it contains about 40,000 inhabitants, and the output of South African gold (Randt

district) for 1893 was 1,478,473 ounces. Johannesburg has a railway connecting it with Cape Town; but what puzzles me is that, for the last twelve months the shares of these gold mines—though their output of gold increases month by month—don't rise in value, but rather fall, and this, too, in spite of the full length of the railway from Cape Town to Johannesburg having been completed last year; so that imports and exports can be conveyed to and fro with speed and certainty, instead of with much delay and uncertainty, as was the case when everything had to be dragged there in bullock-carts, or heavy stage-coaches, over execrable tracks, and across torrents and rivers which every fall of rain rendered impassable. This is more than "any fellah can understand."

I said just now that my son Gerald earned more in the Transvaal than he could here. I will just enlighten some of my readers, who may not be in the know, what a well-conducted, well-mannered, honest and honourable young man is offered in this vast city of London. I ain't guessing, because my third boy, Jack, through kind interest of a friend, was fortunate enough (save the mark!) to be allowed to give his services in a large and rich Insurance Office, not far from the Bank of England, from 9.30 A.M. to 4 (and often 6) P.M. all the year round,

barring a fortnight's holiday, for the magnificent salary of twenty-five pounds a year (about ten shillings a week), and find himself. Can there be worse drudgery than that? I trow not; it would have soon settled my lad, that I do know. However, I was not long in taking him off that stool, and he will soon be off to Ceylon, where the best of climates and a pleasant outdoor occupation await him. All the same, it is a nasty wrench to send one's sons so many thousand miles away, when I am hurrying towards the three-score and ten limit, and may, therefore, be popped into the cremating pot before they come home again.

On the other hand, what can a lad do nowadays in England to earn an honest living, if he has not great interest to push him forward, or a profound knowledge of Euclid and Trigonometry, sufficient to fit him for the present humbugging examination considered necessary, before he can adopt the army as a profession. As it is, if he don't revel in the *pons asinorum*, it is no earthly use his being good at athletics, plucky, and a high-minded gentleman—qualities which used formerly to be considered essential to the making of a good soldier, but are now only of secondary value to a superior “Board School” education.

CHAPTER XVII.

Am invited to lay out a Racecourse in Hamilton Park—Mr. D. and the Duke of Portland (?)—Horses with One-sided Mouths—My Opinion of the Cause—Different Methods of Treatment—Cruel Practice of many Veterinary Surgeons—Professor Loffler's method Exemplified—An Account of the way the Operation of Filing the Teeth is carried out—Jockeys and Stable-lads at Newmarket—The Stablemen's Institute—Absurd Prejudices of some Trainers—My Efforts to obtain Subscriptions—Land Presented by Lady Wallace—A Word about the Rous Hospital and Almshouses—The Sources from which their Cost is Defrayed—Nothing of the Kind to assist the Institute—Description of the Building and its Object.

IT was in the year 1887, I was asked by some sportsmen in Glasgow to lay out a racecourse and organise a race-meeting in Hamilton Palace Park, which is about ten miles by road or rail, from that large and commercially rich city on the Clyde. The promoters had obtained leave to fence off part of the fine park—out of sight of the Palace—and lease it for sporting purposes; and a better situation for a racecourse could hardly be conceived—fine old turf requiring very little levelling, with a straight run in of five furlongs. The course was one mile in circumference, the Park being bounded on one side by

the Clyde, and on the other by a substantial high wall.

The good Duke gave me permission to put up at the Palace, perhaps the finest structure of its kind in Great Britain, where a dear old housekeeper, who was as clever a cook as one need wish to see, was always pleased to make one comfortable. Within a radius of ten miles there is a population of one million, and one would have thought that the venture would have drawn vast crowds of sportsmen eager to witness the racing, combined with the privilege of enjoying the picturesque surroundings of the Park. But, unlike the dwellers south of the border, the Northerners don't really care (as a nation) for horse-racing, and the large outlay has not as yet brought in a profitable return ; for never more than twelve thousand people have attended the races on any one day. However, as one interested, I have not yet given up the hope that Glasgow will send a larger proportion of its population to Hamilton Park, on the not unfrequent holidays they have set apart each year. Comfortable and commodious stands, a perfect paddock, and an undeniably sound, well laid out course, in such a Park—were it only ten miles from London—would indeed be a gold mine, and no error.

Well, it was during the first year of the new

race-course, that the great Glasgow Exhibition was opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales, and a grand and imposing ceremony it was. It was during this same week those sportsmen interested in the new race-course, celebrated their inaugural dinner in the large dining-saloon in the Exhibition-building, and thereby hangs rather a funny tale. Marky Beresford, as starter, and I, as chairman, attended the race-meeting, and were invited to join some thirty others at this inaugural dinner. As I was walking into the saloon to take my place, I spotted at a side-table, an old friend, who had many good points, but one unfortunate failing, and that was not entirely unconnected with a too keen appreciation of strong drinks. I, of course, went and shook hands with him, but quickly discovered that he had, for company sake I presume, partaken of as much liquor as he could carry. He besought me to use my persuasive powers to induce the waiter to bring him just one more glass of green Chartreuse; but I told him I thought he had had plenty, and, as the fireworks in the Exhibition grounds were just then commencing, I tried to persuade him to inhale the ozone of the outer air, rather than imbibe any more strong waters; but, finding I could not prevail, I joined my companions at the festive board.

We soon finished our repast, and were just enjoying our cup of coffee, before going out to the beautifully illuminated grounds, and various amusements in the gardens, when up came my friend of the side-table with a somewhat unsteady gait, and wanted to sit down, with the object of getting hold of at least one glass of his favourite green Chartreuse. But this I could not permit, and, to awe him into submission as well as to induce him not to force his presence on our private party, I said: "If you will promise to leave us and go into the gardens, I will introduce you to the Duke of Portland." "Where is he?" quoth he. "Your Grace," I said, giving Marky Beresford a dig in the ribs, to prepare him for the part I wished him to play, "I am sure you won't mind my introducing you to a neighbour of yours in the country, Mr. "Drunky," and, as you are both good sportsmen, you ought to know each other." Marky took up the cue right well, and, bowing with patronising and Duke-like grace, said he was only too pleased to have the opportunity of making the acquaintance of one he had heard so much of, but as yet had never had the satisfaction of meeting.

Mr. "Drunky" bowed, as well as he knew how—though not without a great effort did he succeed in keeping his knees off the floor—in humble obeisance

to his highly esteemed neighbour, and declared, with an occasional hiccup, that the proudest moment of his life had at length arrived, and his most ardent wish gratified. "Don't mention it, my dear sir," put in Marky. "I hope we may soon become fast friends; now tell me, where do you stay for Doncaster Races?" "I always stop in the town, your Grace, with the same party of friends," replied Mr. "Drunky." "Ah! but this year you must throw them over, dear Mr. 'Drunky,' you really must, and come and stay with me at Welbeck. I always manage to get together a cheery party for that week, and I shall be charmed if you will come. I always have a special train there and back, and I hope you will thoroughly enjoy yourself." Overwhelmed with a flood of gratitude, and the not yet extinct fumes of the green Chartreuse, Mr. "Drunky," with a broken voice and unsteady utterance, assured his Grace he was too good, but—— "No, no, never mind; I know what you are going to say. I'll brook no denial. You come the Monday before Doncaster—I shall expect you! and you shall receive a hearty welcome. I hope, also, that my *chef* will succeed in his efforts to please you; and, above all, I can promise you, what I am sure you highly appreciate, the best my cellar can afford, and (ah! I observe your eyes twinkle) plenty of it, old boy. Now, that's arranged."

I don't know that I ever laughed more heartily in my born days, and so would you if you had heard the fluent and cordial invitation of the one, and observed the liquor-begotten effusive gratitude of the other. Our party broke up, and we saw no more of Mr. "Drunky" that night. But I have not done with the peculiar one yet; for, shortly after the above incident, I got a letter from the real Duke of Portland, enclosing one he had received from Mr. "Drunky," in which letter he thus expressed himself: "*I cannot be too grateful to your Grace for the very kind and cordial invitation you were good enough to accord me, last week, at the Glasgow Exhibition, and hope that you did not think me wanting in courtesy. But, the rough way in which the matter-of-fact old Mate introduced me to you, so upset me, that I feel I ought to apologise for any annoyance I may have unintentionally caused you. With the greatest respect, &c. &c.*" The Duke read between the lines that I had been up to some game or another, and answered Mr. "Drunky's" letter, saying he must be labouring under some misapprehension as he had never been to Glasgow in his life, so could not have met him there.

Of course I made it all right with the Duke, but the unfortunate victim of the joke would not believe he had been duped, and possibly never would, had

he not been travelling by the Great Northern to Doncaster on the evening before the race-meeting. Then, as luck would have it, he rode in the same carriage as four other sportsmen, to whom he was unknown; and one of them, Mr. "Sugar," to amuse his friends, told them the story as it had been narrated to him. During the temporary absence of Mr. "Drunky," who, doubtless, had sought oblivion in a glass, one of the party discovered—by the name on his travelling-bag—that the unknown was no other than the identical victim of the joke. Poor "Drunky"! he must have had a *mauvais quart d'heure*, as he was obliged to listen, if not to join, in the boisterous mirth evoked at his own expense, and then for the first time realised what an ass he had made of himself.

I had no sooner arrived on the course at Doncaster the following morning, than "Sugar" informed me how he had unwittingly shown me up, and that I might expect to have my head broken by the wrathful Mr. "Drunky." Whilst I was standing in the paddock shortly afterwards, talking to some friends, I spied the green Chartreuse devotee, advancing, with determined mien and rapid strides towards me, apparently thirsting for my blood. But when he got within a few yards of me, he suddenly broke into a peal of laughter, and, holding

out his hand, freely admitted that I and Marky had fairly bested him. So the lion took a friendly glass with the lamb, and vowed eternal friendship.

There are other funny stories about the sportive Mr. "Drunky," but you have had a sufficient dose of him already. To vary the scene a bit, let us return to the equine species, and study the different modes of treatment they are subjected to by the intelligent professor with nerve, and the blundering vet. who has lost what little nerve he ever possessed. In every string of racehorses, when at exercise, you may observe how differently some horses carry their heads to what others do. We will place ourselves on the Lime-kilns gallop at Newmarket on a fine bright morning, and watch the sheeted racers walk listlessly down to the limit of that beautiful galloping ground, accompanied by the head lad, who has received from his master—the trainer—orders of the distance and pace each horse is to canter or gallop, to the spot he selects to await their approach, as he sits on his well-trained hack.

Of course we all know that out of thirty horses now turning to go up the gallop, no two horses have precisely the same dispositions, and we will say six three-year-olds are now galloping at three parts speed up the six-furlong track. Some jump off and pull hard at their riders, and will not cease

pulling till they begin to tire ; others, hating the task set them, don't half take hold of their bits, and require kicking and cuffing all the way. All have snaffle-bits in their mouths, and, maybe, much the same class of riders on their backs ; but what I want to call your attention to is the peculiar way some of these horses hold their heads, not so much high or low, but with their jaws twisted round to one side or the other, almost giving you the idea they wish to savage the horse next them. The lads riding, often keep drawing the snaffle quickly through their mouths, thinking, by so doing, they will get their respective horses to carry their heads straight, but in reality, inflicting in many cases great pain on the tender gums or ulcerated inner side of the animal's cheeks, and if the interested owner asks what is the reason his pet horse carries his head in such a hideous and uncomfortable fashion, he is told, "I can't make it out ; he used not to do it, but lately he seems to have got a one-sided mouth."

Fools ! and slow to believe what that most intelligent of horse-dentists, Professor Löffler, has vainly insisted on for many years—viz., that the animal so carrying his head, has a sore place on his cheek or jaw, caused by the too sharp edges of the large back teeth, the pain of which is much

aggravated by the rider sawing at his horse's mouth with the snaffle. I can fancy I hear some self-opinionated horsey reader exclaim, "What rot!" Well, let that party skip the next page or two and remain an idiot, and presently, when he has got the pieces down on his horse because he makes out he has some ten pounds in hand, he will, perhaps, be horrified to observe that, after two or three false starts, his usually quiet nag has gone nearly mad, and is careering over the Heath, with his little jockey pulling at him with all his might, the while he saws the snaffle backwards and forwards through his mouth, thereby causing excruciating pain to the poor beast, whose teeth have been neglected, or perhaps filed, by an ignoramus.

Now, please bear with me, whilst I try to describe the sensible and sensitive treatment of Loffler, as compared with the stupid and cruel practice of some vets. We will call the horse Peter. Now, Peter, who has been feeding right well, and never leaving an oat or a bean, gradually goes off his feed. He begins by leaving a double handful of food in his manger, and finishes by poking the choice delicacies set before him from one side of the trough to the other, perhaps bolting a mouthful now and again, but not masticating his food. "May be it's his teeth, master?" says the head lad. "Go and tell

the vet. to come," says the trainer. That worthy arrives with several huge, coarse files, with wide iron faces fastened into long wooden handles. The unfortunate horse is brought round and firmly fixed on the pillar reins, taken up as short as they will go ; then that horribly cruel invention, the twitch, is brought, and twisted as tightly round the poor brute's tender upper lip as the biceps of the helper, and the strength of the cord can twist it ; maybe one of the animal's forelegs are held up by another assistant. Then the "plucky" vet., clutching tight hold of his largest and roughest file with both hands, shoves it laterally into the horse's mouth and rapidly pushes it up and down, as long as he has wind enough to do so ; or till, alarmed by the quantity of blood flowing from poor Peter's mouth, the unfeeling idiot draws out the weapon, and oracularly declares, "That's done 'em, them old teeth won't trouble him any more yet a while. The horse won't eat for a few days, but you needn't take any notice of that : shouldn't wonder if his gums ain't a bit sore ;" and poor Peter, sweating with fright and pain, is allowed to swing round to his manger and subsist on linseed mash and soft food, till the running sores, caused by the file, have healed over.

But let's watch Loffler's mode of proceeding.

He also brings with him two or three files, beautifully made and highly polished. He puts them in a bucket of clean water, pulls up his shirt-sleeves, and bids the lad looking after Peter take his head-collar off; then he pushes the horse sideways from him a few times, till the horse, realising that no mischief is meant, resigns himself to his visitor. Loffler then, standing with his back pressed against the horse's flank, bids him come round, and though at first he may object and look nasty, he soon obeys, and Loffler puts one hand in his mouth and gently holds his tongue, while he passes the other hand, with outstretched forefinger, down the outside edge of Peter's back teeth, and at once detects the razor-like edge of one or more of them, as well as the sloughing sore on the inside of the cheek, caused by the sharp edge of the teeth, and the before-mentioned sawing of the snaffle. On one occasion Loffler asked me to put my forefinger up the side of the real Peter's back teeth, and when I withdrew it I firmly expected to find it cut, the edge feeling to me as sharp as any knife. By this time Peter has every confidence in his dentist, and he actually pokes out his nose as if courting the use of the file.

Loffler next proceeds to take a pretty little file out of the bucket, passes it two or three times

into the horse's mouth to convince him there is no malice, and then, holding the short handle with one hand, he passes the other with the blade of the file in it, between the teeth and the cheek, so conducting the rough face of the instrument on to the very spot requiring filing, and gently moves it up and down, all the time making sure with his forefinger that the file is grating against the sharp edge he wishes to smooth, and assuring himself that it does not touch the gum. In three minutes the operation is over, and the horse is allowed to turn round to his manger, and he starts eating with evident satisfaction—the very food he could not touch before. No twitch is used, no blood is drawn, Peter is not the least put out, and his confidence in man is increased tenfold. Loffler then washes his file, puts on his coat, and calmly remarks what sensible, docile animals horses are when kindly treated, and is ready to go up to any horse in the stable, no matter what his character, without even his head-collar on.

Now, ain't there a wide difference in the two professors and their treatment of the equine species? We all know how uncomfortable it is to accidentally bite one's own cheek, and thereby set up a temporary sore; but how much more painful would it be if your sore cheek were

roughly rubbed against your teeth—even if they had not sharp edges! And, surely, all can enter into the feelings of a horse who, suffering great pain from being constantly jobbed in the mouth by his rider, is quite unable to masticate his corn, even though he may be as hungry as a hawk. He also gets the credit of having a one-sided mouth or being given to bolting, and all from this cause. All those really fond of horses will excuse me for having dwelt so long on this topic. It is not a fad of mine, for it is well known to those who have to do with the animal how many horses, particularly race-horses, do suffer from their teeth, and how seldom the mouth is examined at all in a racing-stable. When the vet. is called in to look at a horse's mouth, it is nine times out of ten—eh! nineteen out of twenty—because the animal don't masticate his corn; and but few owners or trainers connect an awkward mouth with a state of the teeth, but are content to believe that the horse's mouth was neglected in breaking, or to put down to temper, the fact of his not going straight or bolting.

In hunting-stables sore gums and cheeks do not so often exist as in racing-stables, simply because it is but rarely a snaffle-bridle is put on a hunter that pulls hard, and, therefore, it is only when the watering bridle is used for exercise that the saw-

ing process can be practised, and that very seldom; but a light-hearted racehorse, with a light-weighted rider, is subject to it most days at exercise, and pretty well every time there is a false start on the racecourse. Talking of light weight lads and their manner of steering their horses at exercise, let us turn for a moment to consider whence so many little lads are obtained, and how they are fixed when employed in racing-stables. I feel sure there is hardly any town in Great Britain where there are so many diminutive specimens of humanity employed as at Newmarket, and a wonderful intelligent lot they are. As most of these boys are far removed from their parents and relations, they have an especial claim on the sympathy and kind feeling of those they work for, or who are interested in the horses they look after; and, though I am a firm believer in the merits of the ash-plant, when applied with judgment and moderation, either to a stubborn, pig-headed horse or to a lying or obstinate lad, yet, in both cases, in nine times out of ten, kind treatment does more good than rough and violent measures.

As I believe and hope that many of my readers are amongst those who subscribed so generously to the building of the Institute (now in full swing) intended for the benefit of the men and lads in charge

of racehorses or studs in and around Newmarket, you won't mind my alluding to it here. I collected about £2500 out of the £3000 subscribed for the erection of that building, and was accorded a certain amount of *kudos* for the nippy way I was always alongside a rich owner so soon as his horse's number was up as the winner of a good stake. Nothing like tapping 'em when the first flush of victory warms their hearts ; nevertheless, it is expedient sometimes to suggest to the owner of a good favourite for a big race, before it comes off, that if his horse wins he should subscribe a certain percentage of his winnings to the good cause. This he is generally willing enough to do, just to bring him "luck like." At the same time I will own that there are many that have helped us who have not had any luck, and many more who have not a horse at all—the more credit to them. Now, I hold it must be a good thing for the stable-lads to have a comfortable, well-contrived building where they can enjoy various games, and a quiet room where those so disposed can read without interruption ; besides which, since the opening of the Institute (which ceremony was performed, with his well-known kindness of heart, by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales last July) there have been concerts held in the large hall, which the lads much appreciate, and these we hope to continue.

It is curious how some of the trainers crab this Institute. They try and make out that it brings the lads together to talk over the chances of the horses under their charge for some of the big races, just as if they could not, or did not, do that in many a tap-room or billiard-room in the town, before there was any Institute for them. At all events, the most prejudiced must acknowledge that it is better for the lads to talk in a building open only to themselves, and where they have no chance of meeting any of the numerous touts and horse-watchers who constantly waylay and "treat" them, for the sake of getting information which they have no right to divulge. Of course, there are many lads still, who prefer a snug tap-room where a glass of beer or tawny port, and the present of a cigar (probably home-made) is at their disposal, *if* they will only enlighten the donor as to the likelihood of the horse they are in charge of standing a preparation or not, or whether their horse is off his feed, &c. &c. All I know is that there are hundreds of stable-lads who frequent the Institute now, who, before it was built, had no other place to go to, where they could enjoy any sort of game, except the "pubs." in the town, where the company, to put it mildly, was somewhat mixed.

If any of my readers feel inclined to help the

Institute they will do so best by subscribing to the annual expense of keeping it up, or sending presents of books to better furnish the library. It is not generally known that there are some fifteen hundred men and lads employed in looking after horses in and around Newmarket; and as the great majority come from distant parts, and are mainly selected on account of their small stature and consequent aptitude for riding as light weights, they necessarily require some sort of protection and looking after. I have never seen a brighter or more intelligent, cleanly lot of faces than I have noticed amongst these Newmarket lads, when some hundreds of them have congregated together in the Institute on the occasion of a concert; and I feel sure that none will accuse me of exaggeration, if they will come and judge for themselves at any of the series of concerts we (the managers) intend to organise during the race weeks.

Here I ought to mention that the Institute is built on a plot of ground most kindly given for the purpose by Lady Wallace, widow of the late Sir Richard Wallace, who himself nobly presented the adjoining acre of land as the site of the Rous Memorial Hospital and Almshouses; so it is easy to find. All are welcome to come and see how the youths are catered for, as well as the sick and

mained, and the necessitous old trainers, jockeys, and their near relatives. The Bentinck and Rous Memorial funds supply the necessary amount of money to defray the small yearly pensions of the men, as well as the expenses of the hospital and buildings; but, as the Institute has no fixed fund to draw from, I must appeal to my readers to help, by voluntary contributions, the inadequate yearly subscription list for the "Stablemen's Institute," and if those who have good luck only send a small percentage of their winnings to Messrs. Hammond's Bank at Newmarket, it will be gratefully acknowledged, and I can vouch for its being well laid out for the benefit of those who, though exposed to sundry and manifold temptations, yet as a body are hard to beat as a trustworthy and hard-working set of lads.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Treat to the Crimean Veterans—Difficulty of Finding them out—Object to Change their Suits for those Provided—I Set the Example—We Muster about Eighty—We Spend a Jovial Day and all the old Boys are Delighted—A Bit more about Pedestrians—Jackson, the “American Deer”—Ten Mile Race for Men over Fifty—Toddy Ray, not Tottie Fay—“Choppy” Warburton—A Doubtful Certificate of Birth—Somerset House to the Rescue—“Choppy” afterwards Disqualified—I Match him against any Man of the Brigade of Guards—“Choppy” Wins Easily—A Word about Bicycles—Major Tom Holmes—Long Distances Ridden by him when at the Age of Eighty or thereabouts—History of another Crimean Veteran, Bob.

WE are now rapidly approaching the end of my maunderings, and are getting up to date. I don't know that any incident I have taken part in, gave me so much real pleasure as the treat that was got up for the Crimean veterans, on the occasion of the wedding of the Princess May and H.R.H. the Duke of York. It is sad to think how comparatively few of the rank and file there are left of those who embarked for the Crimea in February, 1854, and formed the three Battalions representing the Brigade of Guards. These men, after disembarking at Malta, Scutari and Varna, and

spending over six months between the three places, at last landed in the Crimea in September, 1854. Before setting foot on Russian territory, though not a shot had been fired in anger, a very large percentage had been invalided, and hundreds had succumbed to disease; low fever, dysentery and cholera, being the most fatal maladies. Soon after landing in the enemy's territory the battles of Alma, Balaclava and Inkerman, and the severe dangers and incessant duty in the trenches before Sebastopol followed. To my mind the men who went through the whole of the trying twelve months before the fall of Sebastopol on the 8th of September, 1855, are well worthy of any recognition that can be bestowed on them.

Actuated by this feeling, many of their old officers determined to give the old boys who served in the Crimea in 1854 a treat. I was deputed to organise the entertainment, and was ably assisted by many of the officers now doing duty with the Brigade, notably by Colonel Eaton, who was commanding a battalion of Grenadiers in Chelsea Barracks during the summer of 1893. He willingly gave leave that the large room in which the Guards' theatricals are annually held, should be placed at the service of the veterans for their breakfast and dinner. A subscription was started among the old

Crimean officers, and over £100 was soon forthcoming. The first and most difficult part of the business was to discover the whereabouts of these old boys; but, with willing helpers, some 120 or thereabouts were soon hunted up. They were written to, and invited to parade at Chelsea Barracks on the morning of July 6th (the Royal Wedding day), and on arriving in barracks at 8 A.M. I found a motley crowd of some eighty men, nearly all with four clasps to their medals; and, after shaking hands with those I recollected, I invited all to follow me to a large barrack-room, there to get out of their plain clothes and to indue themselves in a pair of trousers and tunic of dark blue serge, with a field-cap for headgear, so as to render them uniform in appearance, and privileged to the protection and assistance of the police in passing through the crowded thoroughfares, to the place assigned them by the field-officer commanding the district (Lord Methuen) on Constitution Hill. But I had not foreseen the difficulty of inducing the old warriors to leave their beloved plain clothes in charge of the "Master Tailor" and his staff, and I don't believe the men would have got into the serge suits at all, unless I had given them a lead.

Finally they all set to and changed, and really looked quite smart, the jacket having some brass

buttons down the front, and the field-cap some red braid on it. The whole kit only cost just over ten shillings a man. Forty-one pounds I paid at the Army Service Stores on the Embankment for the eighty suits—not dear, was it? no more than the price of a lady's fancy frock. When all had paraded in their uniforms, they made a good breakfast of coffee, ham and bread. Then they were put aboard three large vans I had hired for the purpose, and, with the help of a couple of cabs for the lame ones, we duly arrived in Grosvenor Place, disembarked, and marched (not in very strict formation) through the crowd to a charming spot inside the railings on the Buckingham Palace Garden side of Constitution Hill, where the large plane-trees afforded a pleasant shade from the scorching rays of a wonderful bright and powerful sun, and were here joined by several old officers who took an interest in the day's proceedings.

Well! presently, the large procession of State carriages filed past us on their way to the Chapel Royal, and we just did give the Royalties a cheer! What with the heat and excitement, the old boys became wonderfully thirsty, and sent a deputation to me to allow them to go out of our pen and get some beer (so like them, poor dears!); but I would not allow any of them to go out. So, selecting two

likely men—Corporal Gardyne, who was in our right flank company, and Dougherty, who was lodge-keeper at the Marble Arch (since dead, poor chap)—I sallied forth with them to try and get six gallons of half-and-half to wet their old whistles. But I little dreamed at starting what a task we had dropped in for, as, after getting through the densely packed crowds of men and women, we found all the public-houses in the neighbourhood so besieged with thirsty souls that it was quite impossible to get served. Fortunately I espied a bottle-nosed old cabby on his four-wheeler, whom I felt sure could conduct us to beer; and when I asked him where the best could be obtained, his funny old eyes twinkled, and his nose twitched with delight, as he declared he knew of a “pub.” not far off, where nothing but the very best was sold, and where we might rely on being attended to at once.

He drove us off to his favourite “pub.,” and we had the luck to get our six gallons put up in stone jars; then, with six pewters lent us, we returned to our thirsty old comrades, and no well in the desert was ever more gratefully welcomed than was our supply of half-and-half. That liquid evaporated as quickly, and was as thoroughly appreciated, as any suction I ever distributed. The procession now returned, the wedding ceremony being over, and we

all got on board our vans and returned to Chelsea Barracks. I went out and found a photographer, who came and took three groups—*i.e.*, the men of each battalion together. We now sat down to a good substantial dinner of cold meat, hot vegetables, and hot plum-pudding, washed down with beer ; a barrel of the best having been generously supplied us by Cosmo Bonsor, M.P., and followed up by some special Scotch and tobacco, kindly furnished by Sir Walter Gilbey, and just as I was giving the Royal toast, H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge arrived and said a few kind words, which much touched the old boys, and they just did give him a jolly, and no error, which he richly deserved, for it was real good of him to come, as he had had a hard, long day's work. Then, with a few songs, and many a cheery toast, the party broke up, and I don't believe there was ever a more enjoyable day spent by all concerned. The only *contretemps* was, that one old boy would jump down in the morning from the van, and he fell and broke his arm ; but the doctor of the ambulance corps quickly set it, and, though I had him lodged in St. George's Hospital, we had not fairly sat down to dinner before in he came, and fell to with his one arm, declaring he could not miss the opportunity of a glass with his old friends.

The photographs came out well, and I sent each man a good big copy, Lord Wantage (*née* Bob Lindsay of ours) having kindly given a tenner for that purpose. To each man I had given a briar-root pipe, with the monogram of G and M inscribed thereon, to commemorate the wedding; and to those who could not come, on account of distance or sickness, ten shillings was sent to help them to enjoy themselves at home. The treat was a thorough success, and ought to be repeated annually. The party that met last July will quickly dwindle in numbers, for the old boys drop off rapidly now; I know of six that have been gathered since then. I received many letters of thanks, and all look forward to a repetition of the fête, and I am all for it, too—*nous verrons*. Before I bid adieu to my old comrades (in these pages), I should like to explain how it happened that the list of those asked to the treat last July was confined to the men who had served in the Crimea in 1854: the reason was that we were bound to limit the numbers in some way, on account of the difficulty of conveying them to and from Constitution Hill, on that glorious but crowded day, and the finding them uniforms to prevent their getting lost in the crowd.

If we (the old officers who served in the Crimea) can arrange an annual fête, I hope we shall be able

to include all those who served in the Brigade of Guards up to the fall of Sebastopol, on September 8th, 1855; for the men that took part in the cruel hard work of the trenches are well worthy of any treat we can get up for them. The mere fact of getting the old boys together, and giving them an opportunity of talking over those now distant days in the Crimean War, is much appreciated by the veterans; for very many of them have never set eyes on each other for well-nigh forty years, and the opportunity of renewing their acquaintance over a glass and a pipe, is of itself a great joy to them.

I feel I must add a few words on a subject I feel very strongly about—namely, the way a grateful country (save the mark!) has behaved to her old soldiers. If a soldier had not served with the colours, either in the Crimea or Indian Mutiny, or both, over ten years, he would not be entitled to a pension of any kind; is that generous? If a soldier had served over ten years, but not twenty-one, he got no pension—so I am told—till some three years ago, when a mean grant was voted by Parliament to be distributed to one hundred men (and one hundred men only) each year, as a pension of ninepence a day—that is, five shillings and threepence a week—a rollicking fine acknowledgment of his services, ain't it? And to be entitled to that magnificent

income his character must have been of the best. Had he an irregular character—which means that he occasionally got drunk, and in peace time was consequently absent without leave—no matter how good and brave a soldier he was acknowledged to be when on duty and under fire, he was not entitled to a pension at all. Does that seem just?

I will give an instance of a man I knew fairly well in my battalion, Job Cook. He embarked for the Crimea in February, 1854 (he has four clasps to his medal), and returned with the battalion in July, 1856—two years and six months' foreign service, some of it having been real hot work. He took his discharge when he had served ten years (of course, he ought to have stayed on for eleven more, but he didn't); his conduct had been irregular, therefore the bottom of his parchment was cut off, and up to April, 1894, he has not had a bob of pension. Yet, this man was a good soldier, and made of the stuff that won the battles of Alma and Inkerman. His constitution—notwithstanding his too frequent potations of liquor when off duty—enables him now to do a fair day's work; but he, like all men of sixty odd, finds it very difficult to get any employment. However, at last his name is on the list of the hundred who, from this April, are to draw five shillings and threepence a week pension. Lucky

Job! It is now over thirty years since you left the army, and your medal with four bars has at last entitled you to ninepence a day. Good lad! your grateful country is proud of you; and Job is proud of his generous country, or ought to be?

Gentle readers, you who have no experience of war's alarms, take my tip—and it can't be gainsayed—on active service it is not the good conduct men (those who ought to have wings) that are the most courageous and most willing to risk their lives for their country. No, give me the irregular men: for they most of them have a bit of devil in them, and they will stand up when the goody goodys will lie down. At any rate, with luck, both good and irregular old Guardsmen who were in the Crimea 'twixt Alma and the fall of Sebastopol, shall spend a jolly day in 1894. If they don't, why, blame the author.

Whilst writing of old soldiers, my thoughts revert to old pedestrians. It was in November, 1892, I thought I would, by way of giving old Jackson, the "American deer," whose real name is Howitt (the best man of his day from a mile to ten) a benefit: for he, like many of us, is, in his old age (72), short of coin. So I advertised some prizes to be run for: ten miles by men over 50, and, to make it a bit fairer for the older boys, they were to have fifty

yards start for each year over 50 (but that start was not long enough). A wonderful entry was the result, and on a fine fresh afternoon some thirty-three old gentlemen answered to their names at Stamford Bridge grounds. Many of them I knew by sight, and others more intimately as runners, walkers, or pugilists in old days, and after some trouble, all were ready to start from their different marks when I fired the pistol.

It was indeed wonderful to see how they "bounded" round the track; of course they were all got up in racing gear, with numbers to distinguish them by. The best of those over seventy was Toddy Ray (not to be confounded with Tottie Fay, a peculiar character known in the police courts); he and one or two more of the same age did eight miles in the hour. The motley crew had not toddled more than a mile before it was apparent, bar accidents, that "Choppy" Warburton would win, his action being as graceful as any runner of twenty-five. Unfortunately, I was obliged to leave the ground before the race was over, having to catch a train for Ipswich; but I was informed by post that Warburton had won very easily, having run nearly ten miles in the hour, but that he had been objected to by the second man, on the ground that he was not fifty years old. This

did not surprise me, for the day before the race I had seen Warburton and told him I did not believe it was twenty years since he (then 30) had run thirty miles, four minutes under the three hours. He at once pulled out of his pocket a printed certificate of his birth, which seemed to me satisfactory evidence at the time.

The stakes were withheld, and the second man was told to prove the age of the winner, and to my mind the result was a wonderful instance of the marvellous book-keeping at Somerset House. The second man went there and paid one shilling for a copy of Warburton's certificate, and lo and behold! the document proved that Warburton was not yet forty-nine. Now the production of that certificate fairly astonished me; for his father and mother were both weavers somewhere down Birmingham way, and that their son's age should be chronicled in London at all was, to my mind, a wonderful triumph of red tape. But, sure enough, he was under age, and, of course, was disqualified. The winner was a native of Leicester; and the second, of Nottingham I think. The prizes were duly paid over to the first six old boys, and I invited them to a little dinner-party later on, when I gave each of them a small gold medal to commemorate their extraordinary powers of rapid progression at such

an advanced age. I handed over the balance to the old "American deer," who would have run into a place had not one of his poor old ankles, that had been queer for years, given way. Not one of the old men was the worse for his exertions, and when you consider there were thirty-three starters whose ages varied from fifty to seventy-four, it shows some of us swells must be soft toads indeed; for at this moment, I don't know a gentleman over fifty, who could run eight miles in the hour, even if he had a bull with sharp horns after him.

Though "Choppy" Warburton was justly disqualified, yet he had done such a good performance that, one night, when dining on guard at St. James's, I offered to back him to run any man in the Brigade of Guards ten miles. This was, of course, taken up by a gallant Colonel (himself no mean performer on the cinder-path), and we bet a pony on the result. Both competitors were put through a course of training, and on the day appointed duly toed the scratch at Stamford Bridge. My man, "Choppy," had lately strained one of his ankles, and it looked so inflamed that I bid him wait on the soldier, a smart made, active looking young fellow of twenty-two. "Choppy," as he ran round some two yards behind the Grenadier, implored me to let him go up and make the running; but I refused till two miles had

been covered, and then, as his "dicky" leg seemed no worse, I told him, to his great delight, that he might lap the soldier just to see if he could go any faster. This "Choppy" did with the greatest ease, and was then content to play with the Guardsman till seven miles were covered, when suddenly the Son of Mars laid down on the green sward totally exhausted, whilst my man was as fresh as a kitten—but very low lest the wretchedly slow time should be chronicled in the sporting prints against his name; for he said it would ruin his reputation, and we none of us like to lose our character *in print*. I gave "Choppy" the pony I won, and have not seen him since, but hear he is quite willing to run any soldier.

That poor Grenadier had not a fair chance, for he told me he had been sent away to train by himself at a public-house some twenty miles out of London; where, I should fear, he had not strength of mind to resist sampling the various liquors and other pleasant things that public contained; though even at his very best I don't believe he would beat the old one, who, by-the-bye, was reported not long ago in the newspapers, as having been knocked off his bicycle and rendered *hors de combat* in the Champs Elysées by a French *fiacre*. However, I have heard since that it was not "Choppy," who

is fit and well, I am glad to say. He had gone to Paris to train one Linton, our English bicyclist, in his match with the French champion.

It is surprising what quick time a good man on a bicycle can accomplish nowadays, and how in the cramped position they ride they can keep it up. But they are no good for rough roads, where a fair pedestrian is sure to beat them. Still, on a real well-constructed track of, say, four laps to the mile they can go nearly twice as fast as a runner at ten miles. I am told a track made of wood, such as the bicycle races are now run on at Herne Hill, produces the fastest time. It is some years since I paid two-and-six for a lesson to ride a bicycle, in a building near Albert Gate, soon after these machines came out; but, after a few croppers, I gave it up, and I don't recommend this style of progression to stout elderly parties of either sex.

Major Tom Holmes, who died last year at somewhere about eighty years of age, rode extraordinary distances long after he was well in the seventies. He then rode a tricycle, and thought nothing of taking his little girl on his machine down to Brighton in less time than the fastest coach; but he was a real wonder. I recollect him dining on guard (soon after I joined in 1848) with Henry de Bathe, and a more amusing, cheery couple were hard to find;

and so said their brother actors of the Strollers, an amateur theatrical company who for years enlivened the summer evenings during the Canterbury Cricket Week. Within six months of his death he had taken a long ride on his tricycle ; but, on returning home, he felt so exhausted that he was obliged to dismount and get a glass of brandy and water at a "pub.," and, the road being a bit against the collar, he found it very hard work, tired as he was, to get the pedals to work. Consequently, some small street arabs, seeing the poor old boy in difficulties, slightly parodied the fine old song by singing, "He won't get home till morning." This so exasperated him that he got off his machine, and ran after the urchins (a peculiar idea at eighty-four), and this ill-judged effort caused him much discomfort. In fact, as an old friend of his expressed himself, "it was suicidal," and it brought on an illness of which he subsequently died.

I append to this chapter about the Crimean veterans, a history of the dog Bob, a regimental avourite who accompanied our battalion to the East and home again.

YE FAMOUS DOGGE BOB.*

HIS HISTORIE (BY SERGEANT FEIST).

BOB was a native of the Royal Borough of Windsor, though, like many others who have won distinction in the British army, he started in a humble station of life, having passed his puppyhood in the service of a butcher of that town. He gave early token of a liking for a soldier's life, and in the spring of 1853, the 1st Battalion Scots Fusilier Guards being at Windsor, Bob was frequently found in the barracks, and taken back by his master; but he always returned when he had a chance. His master, finding that Bob had made up his mind to follow the drum, at length gave up all thoughts of reclaiming him, and when the battalion marched to Chobham camp in June, Bob marched with it, a recognised member of the battalion. Here he gave promise of that excellence which afterwards distinguished him as an old campaigner, always first on parade, and when the duties of the day were over, no old hand was better up to foraging and taking care of number one. At the Wellington Barracks in the winter of 1853-4, Capt. H. Drummond, the Acting-Adjutant, allowed Bob

* This account of Bob has been left intact.—ED.

regular rations, and when the battalion embarked on H.M.S. *Simoom*, at Portsmouth, on the 28th Feb. 1854, Bob was among the first on board. Here his career was nearly brought to a close, for on the First Lieutenant seeing Bob, he inquired, "Whose dog is that?" and no one in particular claiming him, the order was given to "Throw him overboard." But, before this could be carried out, it was explained that Bob belonged to every one, and he was allowed to remain, and became as great a pet on board ship as he had been on shore. Bob served at Malta, Scutari, Varna, &c., and on the embarkation for the Crimea he got on board the wrong ship, and, it being ascertained, after the arrival at Baljic Bay, where he was, an escort of officers was sent after him in a boat, and brought him back a prisoner. He was at the landing in the Crimea, and at the battle of the Alma was returned among the "missing." He rejoined the battalion at Balaclava after the flank march, was present at the battle of Balaclava, and at Inkerman he distinguished himself by chasing spent cannon-balls and shells, for which he was awarded a medal. He served in the trenches up to the fall of Sebastopol. Bob returned to England with the battalion at the end of the war, and marched into London at its head in July, 1856, having shared the fortunes of

the corps during a most eventful period. After that, Bob did duty in London, Windsor, and Portsmouth. He had a large circle of acquaintances and admirers, and at guard-mounting at St. James's Palace, or at reviews and field-days in Hyde Park, his portly form and decorated breast attracted considerable attention. While stationed at the Tower he patronised the steamboats in performing the journey between that fortress and the West End, and as he was known to the steamboat people no objection was made.

This distinguished hero met with an untimely death at the beginning of February, 1860. While marching out with his battalion, he was run over by a cart and killed on the spot, to the regret of the whole regiment. He was looked on as a comrade by all, and in the minds of many was associated with the most exciting events of the Russian War. Manifold were the expressions of sorrow, as "poor old Bob" was carried past the battalion by a drummer, who bore him to the Buckingham Palace guard-room.

Bob was a great favourite from the time he first joined, but he showed partiality for no one in particular. He would not go out of barracks with a single individual, except on duty. In commemoration of his faithful service, the officers of the regi-

ment had him stuffed and presented to the Royal United Service Museum, where he may be seen among the mementoes of the Crimean War.

Bob was a good stout specimen of the black and tan terrier, had been educated to sit up on his haunches, and other accomplishments, was "good for a rat," but his accompaniment to the bugles was not considered musical. On the whole he was "a very good dog."

CHAPTER XIX.

Cabbies—A Few of their Names and Nicknames—Captain Fellows and his Cabman—Competition at Crystal Palace for Cabmen—My Preference for Hansoms over 'Busses or Underground Railways—How it took Three Traps to Convey me Three Miles—Out of the Frying-pan into the Fire—My Match with "Sugar" Candy—Shoot or Part—A Case of "Part," as I Win Comfortably but perhaps Luckily—The Whippet, what Manner of Dog—His Use and the Method of Racing these Animals—Large Number of Entries for Whippet Races—Frequent Close Results—All should be Whippeteers—A Word or Two about Clubs—The Orleans—Pelican—The Sports Club—Dinner to Mr. Selous—A Welcome to Lord Dunraven—Prosperous Condition of Sports Club—"Come on!"

I HAVE always been fond of cabbies—*i.e.*, of those who drive a good horse and a comfortable cab and keep a civil tongue in their mouths—and have been a subscriber to their Benevolent Fund, instituted, and so ably conducted by the late Mr. Stormont Murphy. I have several times dined with the old annuitants and their belongings at their annual dinner. They are a wonderful funny lot of old boys, and thoroughly do they enjoy their treat. Many kind friends of the cabby often volunteer to amuse them afterwards with songs and

stories—notably good old Johnny Toole, the merriest and funniest when fit and well. Most of the old drivers are known by some nickname amongst their friends, and some of these terms of endearment are very peculiar. One old cabby who has been some fifty years on the box, Charles Old in his register, is nicknamed “Old and Bitter,” Thomas Bacon (“Porky”), Charles Brown (“Brown Upside Down”), Robert Swannell (“Old Black Lion Bob”), William Speechley (“Nicodemus”), Robert Green (“Old Greeny”), James Tanner (“Doctor”), John Dew (“Rhoderic Dhu”), &c. &c. All that can afford it should subscribe to the Cabbies’ Benevolent Fund, offices at 15 Soho Square, where the secretary, Mr. Safford, will give every information. An annual subscription of five shillings per annum constitutes a cabman a benefit member of the Association, and when incapacitated from following his calling (if elected an annuitant) he receives £20 a year; and if he choose to subscribe the small sum of two shillings a year whilst at work he secures an annuity for his widow or children. There are now 56 annuitants on the Society’s books, many of whom, but for this help, would, after long years of honest industry, be in the workhouse.

Amongst the many repartees made by cabbies

to their fares when not satisfied with the money paid them is one that tickled me much. A Captain Fellows once tendered, we will say, one shilling as the fare; but the cabby begged him to keep the money, as he must have two. After a few civilities had passed between them, the cabby demanded the Captain's name and address, and he, pulling out one of his visiting cards, handed it to the wrathful driver. Cabby turned it over and over, muttering, "Fellows, Fellows"; then, addressing the Captain, added, "Well, these old boots on my feet is fellers, but I should be wonderful sorry to have you for one of 'em."

Only recently I heard one cabby say to another, "Bill, there's a levee on to-day." "Yes," replied the other; "I know there is, Bob, my tulip, and may be, His Royal 'Ighness is *h*expecting me; but I sha'n't go to-day. It's a dry job that, I *h*expects; so let's pull up at the corner, and I'll toss yer who pays for level drinks." At one time I pretty regularly employed a comical old chap who drove a four-wheeler and always patronised the rank in St. James's Street. He went by the name of Esau. One morning, seeing my luggage labelled for Gunton, he perked up, and with pride informed me, "That's where I was born, Sir John; and Esau was a smart young fellow one time, and was well known in

those parts as a handy man at breaking in young horses either to ride or drive. One day I was riding a very promising young one with the hounds, and the old Lord Suffield came galloping along, and, knowing me, he holloaed out, 'Open that gate, Esau.' Now hounds were running hard, and Esau didn't want to lose his place, so I pops my young 'oss over the gate, and, turning round says, 'I beg pardon, but follow me, my lord.' He was very angry at the time, was the old lord, but he gave me five bob afterwards, and told me I was a smart young fellow—and so I was."

Some four years ago I got up a treat for the London cabbies at the Crystal Palace, and collected about eighty pounds for prizes, the competitions being for the best turned out hansom and four-wheeler, trotting races for *bonâ fide* cabhorses only, boxing, and foot-racing. We, luckily, had a fine day for the sports, and all went off right well, though there might have been more competitors for some of the prizes. Take them all round, they are not half a bad lot of chaps, though there are some queer fish amongst them; and when prices of agricultural produce are bad and trade generally is slack, no class of men feel the tightness of the money market more acutely than cab-drivers, and though personally I hate perching on the top of a

'bus like a sick rook, or hurrying along underground like a buck rabbit, instead of bowling along in a good hansom cab like a swell, yet prudence—*alias*, shortness of coin—often enforces this distasteful mode of progression, as well as it also affects the lining material of your upper garments; for riding in or on a 'bus, instead of a cab, is on all fours with having an alpaca lining to your coat, instead of a silk one. It is true that you can exist with either alternative, but there is a wonderful difference in the comfort; still, you know, beggars can't be choosers.

While on the subject of riding on wheels, few have experienced a more sensational two-mile drive than I did one afternoon when returning from Windsor races to Windsor Station. I was in a desperate hurry to catch the train up to town, so jumped into an open trap and bid the driver go hard all. Away he galloped, but he had only a moderate eye for distance, and in consequence very soon collided with a close fly coming in an opposite direction. The boxes of the front wheels came into violent collision. My trap, being the lightest, was turned completely over, and one of the shafts was broken; I was shot out, fortunately on some nice soft grass by the roadside, on my hands and knees, but, being unhurt, I jumped into the close machine,

which, apparently, was none the worse for the cannon. I slammed the door and holloaed to the driver to hurry up; but no luck: for in turning round, the fore-wheel that had borne the brunt of the shock collapsed entirely, breaking up into splinters, and the old tub turned over on its side, lying no distance from the "shay" I had lately quitted. I was soon on my feet, and with a vigorous upheaval of my person got out of the window which was uppermost, and started off, vowing I would trust only to my legs. However, a hansom hove in sight and, jumping into it, I was safely landed at the station, just catching my train. Of course one knows that accidents hardly ever happen singly, at the same time I might have had a fair price that it would take three traps to convey me two miles; and the curious part of it was that I got off scot free, barring barking my shins and being a bit stiff the next day.

One evening at the Turf Club in January, 1892, a select coterie were talking over the sport we had had shooting, at different places, and the elegant "Sugar" (*né* Candy) was taking a good lead in the conversation, and seemed to be classing himself with Walsingham and De Grey as a deadly shot but I mildly hinted he was no flyer with his fowling-piece, and would require a bit of luck to hit a hay-

stack if it was narrow end on. The saccharine one rose at once and retorted that, at all events, he was a better shot than I was. I cast some doubt on this assertion, whereupon he promptly offered to shoot me a match at pigeons, and I being nothing loth, our young friend Arthur kindly wrote out the conditions. We were to shoot at 25 birds each, 25 yards rise, for 25 sovs. a side, p.p.* in three days' time, which would enable us to send for our guns. We both signed the conditions, and took a friendly glass to show there was no bad feeling ; afterwards walking up Piccadilly together to our respective roosts.

On the following morning I got a note from the valiant one, sweet and gentle in tone : " Would you mind our match being off until the warm weather comes ? " I wrote back : " Shoot or part Thursday at noon, and, win or lose, we can have another try when the weather is warmer. " On the Thursday morning there was a cruel thick fog with a rimy frost, and it seemed impossible to bring off the match ; but on my wiring to the Gun Club at Notting Hill I received an answer that the fog was lifting there and it would be quite possible to shoot at noon. So I jumped into a hansom with its lamps all ablaze, and called at " Sugar's " abode, only to find that he had already gone to the scene of action,

* Play or pay.

guns and all ; so on we sped, though very slowly, as the fog was very dense. However, as we neared the rendezvous the light got better, and, though very hazy, yet the boundary fence was good to see from the Pavilion. There I found the candied one all ready, and (apparently) eager for the fray, a merry twinkle in his eye and full of shoot, as he had just grassed three doves in succession. The company was a very small one, because no one in the St. James's Street district thought it would be possible for the match to come off. My boy had come by underground from Sloane Square to see his dad through it. We took our top coats off, and our doughty deeds are thus described in a small newspaper cutting I have before me :—" Sir John took a lead at the fifth round, and shooting in fine form, increased his advantage and gained a victory at the twenty-second, with eighteen kills to his credit. Colonel Candy stopped thirteen birds out of twenty-one." As in most matches at pigeons, luck had much to do with the result, and Dame Fortune was very kind to me, I freely admit, for I put in some long and lucky second barrels which proved very useful ; still, I fancy "Snowy" (as some of the ladies call me) is quite as good a shot as "Sugar," but that ain't saying over much : it is only mild plating form to be candid.

In my old age I am thinking of going in for a new (to me) style of sport: "Whippet-racing." Many of my readers, I feel sure, don't even know what a whippet is. It is a member of the canine species, much resembling a miniature greyhound; they run from eight to thirty-eight pounds in weight, and I fancy many of them were originally a cross between a greyhound and a fox-terrier. Most of them have smooth coats, but there are also wire-haired whippets. The owner of a whippet is termed a whippeteer. These little dogs are wonderful speedy, take a delight in racing against each other, and when well-trained (I am told) nothing will divert their attention from running at top-speed to their owner or trainer. The distance they run is limited to 200 yards straight, and the track they race on is made of cinders, firmly rolled quite smooth and hard, and wide enough to allow at least five dogs to run abreast.

When contesting a match or sweepstakes, the owner of a whippet deposes some friend to hold his dog with both hands at the starting-point; then, when all are in readiness, each owner or trainer runs backwards from his whippet waving a handkerchief or cloth, whilst all the time calling his dog to hurry towards him, and when these men have arrived near the winning-post, the starter fires off a pistol, and

all the competing dogs are slipped at the same instant, and race as hard as they know how, to their owner, who must be five yards behind the winning-crease or post. The little racers seize the handkerchief in their teeth, and are swung up into their master's arms. To make it fair for all sizes and weights, the smaller whippets are allowed a start according to their weights; and, in addition, are handicapped according to their performances, the result frequently being some splendid racing, as the races are often only won by inches. The heats are run off in quick succession, and sometimes there are as many as three hundred entries for one handicap. Say two hundred come to the post, well! that entails forty races of five dogs each; then the forty winners run the second heats in eight races; then the semi-final two heats are run; and, eventually, the final brace are slipped—making fifty-one races, sometimes run in one, at others in two, days.

The two great attractions in whippet-racing are: first, the sport is suited to all kinds and conditions of the human species, of both sexes, wealth not being a *sine quâ non*: for even those of slender means can be whippeteers, as you can keep forty to fifty whippets for the same outlay per week that you can one racehorse. Secondly, it is the only

sport utterly devoid of cruelty ; for it is apparent that the whippet will only strain every nerve to be the first to reach the owner or trainer who really is kind to it ; and the fonder it is the more resolutely will it strive to hurry to its beloved possessor. Then, again, the whippeteer can keep his racer in his room ; he can exercise and feed it himself ; he can gauge its improvement to a nicety by his stopwatch ; and no one but himself need know what time his whippet can do its 200 yards in. His wife, child, relation, or friend, can act as starter, by holding and slipping it at a given signal to its owner. To a business man it is an inducement for him to rise betimes and exercise himself and his dog before he goes to work, and again when he returns home. In fact, he has always an object for keeping himself in health-giving exercise, a long way in front of the uninteresting "constitutional" along the "'ard 'igh road." Yes, we must all keep whippets. Pugs and Poodles, Pomeranians and Skys, Collies and Danes, and all non-sporting pets must give way to the possible breadwinner—the fleet and bloodlike whippet.

The best whippets can do 200 yds. in 12 secs., nearly twice as fast as a man can run, and somewhere about the rate of 36 miles an hour. Up to now there has been but little interest taken in

whippet-racing around London, and the principal whippeteers are colliers in Lancashire. Many of them are as keen over a dog-race as dear old George Payne ever was over a Derby or Leger ; but once let the sport be started in Middlesex under good auspices, it will soon be as popular as in the Potteries, and I venture to think it will commend itself to sportsmen and sportswomen of all degrees : at any rate, that is my impression, and I am going to try what I can do to give it a helping hand. I am not a whippeteer, but hope to be soon, and have already secured a first-class comfortable basket (representing the best of loose boxes in a racing stable) for my whippet's comfort, at three shillings net at the Stores, besides giving fifty shillings for a stopwatch to time its speed with, and as soon as the Green Park is open in the summer mornings I shall be there with the "Pride of Park Place" gambling around me, and hope, dear readers, I shall meet many of you at the same game.

What with being the owner of the Orleans Club at Twickenham, and Chairman of the Pelican Club in Gerrard Street, and now of the Sports Club in St. James's Square, besides having been on the Committee of other clubs, I have had a fair insight into the management and interior economy of club-

land; and though I lost my own money over the Orleans venture, and the extravagant tactics of the Pelican manager shut up that peculiar conglomeration of mixed spirits, I now devote much of my time to the interests of the Sports Club, and I have no doubt of its turning out a great success, both financially and socially. The object of the founders of this club was to get together under one roof a representative body of members who are, or have been (when in their prime), fond and active exponents of all kinds of sport and athletic exercises, requiring strength, activity, and skill, such as rowing, cricket, football, tennis, rackets, running, *et hoc genus omne*, and more particularly to provide a home and rendezvous for athletes and sportsmen of every nationality. With that object in view it was considered necessary to put the annual subscription within the reach of all, even of those (and they are in the majority) of slender means; trusting by numbers, to compete with the hosts of more expensive clubs already in existence.

I think all will admit that these intentions were laudable; but the fear, or rather doubt, at starting was, whether the Executive would be warranted in leasing expensive premises in a first rate West-end situation, and I must say I trembled when we opened our club just a year ago. Mind you, we

had no wealthy backers to put down, or even guarantee (as we ought to have had with luck) from five thousand to ten thousand pounds (at least) to start us, but we went at it with a will and a determination to carry the venture through. Few can now doubt that we have been most successful, for we have 2500 members on our books, and, though the subscription was raised last May from three to five guineas for town members, from two to three for country members, and from one to two guineas for officers on full pay of either service in England (foreign members, and officers serving abroad are admitted at one guinea per annum), we still have a goodly number of candidates down for election at each of our Committee meetings. As yet we have no entrance-fee, but, being a company, each member when he is elected has to take at least one £1 share; and we have now made arrangements to take over the whole of the adjoining block of buildings in York Street, and I see no reason why we should not make up our numbers to three thousand before 1895 sets in.

I attribute much of our success to the friendly and cordial way we have held out the hand of fellowship to foreign athletes and our Colonial brothers; for we have already entertained the French football team, the Australian cricket eleven, the

Oxford and Cambridge football teams, the 'Varsity cricket elevens, and the International lawn-tennis teams. We have welcomed that plucky and distinguished traveller, sportsman, and soldier, Mr. Selous, on his return from Matabeleland; and last, but not least, we have been fortunate enough to induce Lord Dunraven to accept our hospitality on his return from American waters, where he so boldly and single-handed essayed to bring back to old England the America Cup (the envied trophy of all yachtsmen), and on that occasion we were honoured by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge, who condescended to dine with the members of the Sports Club to add to the *éclat* of Lord Dunraven's welcome home. That's not a bad record for a young club which has only been in existence since February, 1893, is it? At any rate, I am game to give a tenner for a photograph of any other club, young or old, that can boast of such hospitality during any twelve months from its foundation. Ay! and we mean to keep it up. So you elderly men that are at your best, not to say past, and you young men that love athletic exercises and sport of all kinds, come and join the Sports Club, for you are bound to meet more kindred spirits under our club-roof than in any other in this tight little island. Come and help

us to be a power in the land of sport, and the upholders of all that is fair, honourable, and of good repute among the nations of the world, and the terror of all those whose practices are mean, contemptible, and unsavoury in the two hemispheres. Come on!

CHAPTER XX.

Forgotten Scraps—Hurst Park—Course and Stands—'Appy 'Ampton—Chestnuts in Hampton Park—New Method of Preparing a cheap Cigar—I am Initiated into the Process—The lost Coat—Lord Cornwallis (?)—Poor Jerry Goodlake's Illness—His Death—Major-General George Knox—Death busy among my Friends—A sympathetic Brother—A little Stimulant!—Practising what he preached—My Labours nearly over—A short Account of Joseph Lewis—Last Hopes—Last Words—"Ring down the Curtain!"

It was only the other day I went to Hurst Park, and certainly it was a lovely bright afternoon. I don't think I have ever seen a more perfect race-course, or any more comfortable stands. The course itself is the very best going, no matter whether it has been raining cats and dogs, or bright Phœbus has burnt up the surrounding country. Four years ago I superintended and laid out the course and the position of the stands, the latter no easy matter, for the space at that end of the ground is very circumscribed. The Five Furlongs is quite straight, and finishes close to the stand. You have not got to walk to the winning post, as you must do at either Sandown or Kempton, if you want to be

close to the horses when they finish. The turns in the oval course are easy. On no other course has so much money been spent in order to insure its being accurately level; for (barring a short bit, say three hundred yards along the river-side) the whole of the turf was stripped off, the earth underneath levelled to a nicety, and several inches of good soil spread before the turf was replaced, and, where necessary, herring-bone drains were laid to a good fall; while to prevent the going ever being too hard, as it frequently is at Ascot, Epsom, and other places, hydrants have been fixed at intervals, so that the course is always green and fresh, and concussion an unknown quantity. Those that recollect 'Appy 'Ampton must indeed marvel at the change, for there was no rougher, more uneven, and dangerous course than that was. Deary me! what fun I have had at that peculiar gathering.

On one occasion when I had made one of a coach load, and had arrived in ample time to take a stroll before the races amongst the gipsies and their tempting cocoanut shies, I had been watching the Cockneys enjoy their rides on ponies and donkeys, when, as luck would have it, a nicely rounded, stout lady came bumping along on a pony and suddenly lost her balance, falling backwards on the near side of her palfrey, though her useful but not elegant

foot was still fixed in the stirrup on the top of the saddle. Her petticoats and skirt formed a voluminous hide for her head and shoulders, which rested on the grass, but didn't afford any shelter for other parts of her form usually embowered in their ample folds. Of course I at once rushed forward, and, pulling myself together for a huge effort, encircled my arms around her forty-inch waist, and was in the act of heaving her back into the saddle, the while (to allay all flutterings of her expansive bosom and chances of hysterics) warbling in sympathetic assurance, "All right, Maria; no harm done. I'll put you in your saddle in a jiffy," when I felt a rough hand seize my shoulder and a gruff voice demanded, "Holloa, young man, what are you doing with my Missus? Leave her to me." I said, "Take hold and help, for the lady's that solid I ain't at all sure I can hoist her by myself. Now then, both together!" and up went the Missus, none too soon, for flutterings had set in, and her spouse conveyed her to the nearest booth, there to procure a drop of the best to calm her feelings. Poor fragile thing! she ought to have broken her neck if she had had any luck, and then her hubby would have had to warble, "*You dunno where yer are.*"

Yes! the Cockneys just did enjoy themselves at

'Appy 'Ampton! Thousands used to drive down in their gigs, with a tasty luncheon, and various stone jars of liquid stowed away for a picnic on the common. It was just a nice distance for their quadruped to take them, and very many of them pulled up under the horse-chestnut-trees in Bushey Park, and never tried to get any further.

I forget whether I told you how amused and surprised I was, one bright autumn day when the yellow leaves were falling off those fine horse-chestnuts, to see a trap pull up at the side of the road near the fountain in the park, and for the life of me I could not make out why its occupants were so busy picking up the bright-coloured leaves and stringing them carefully on a long bit of wire with a flat bit of wood fastened at one end. The wire was about a yard long, stood up straight in the cart, with its end twisted in the shape of a hook—much such an arrangement as you see employed in shops and offices to file bills and orders on. But no papers were ever so carefully handled, or such discrimination exercised, as in selecting these leaves of the same tint, and when the wire was loaded so that it could carry no more leaves, it was carefully placed in the cart on its wooden end. Well! just as the load was complete, I asked the driver what he was going to do with the leaves, and he, with a look of

pity at my ignorance, replied, "Why, in course, we are taking them to the Minories, and when we gets there, we takes the ribs out of the leaves, then we soaks the flat parts in tabaccer-water, nice and strong, and then partly dries 'em, and cuts 'em up in lengths; after that we rolls 'em up for smokes. Ain't yer never tried one? they ain't 'alf bad, I can assure yer; and we can afford to sell 'em middling cheap. 'Oo says a good smoke for a penny? Why, yer wouldn't expect to find 'em all bacca at that price! Oh! no, there's no place wher' yer can get the makings of a low-priced smoke 'arf as cheap as what you can in Bushey Park: yer can 'ave the leaves for the picking them off the ground, and a bucket or two of real, full-flavoured baccy-water don't cost a lot, do it?" I replied, "Good business! The first man that took that notion must have been useful, very; but I don't feel keen for a bundle of them."

Before leaving 'Appy 'Ampton and its funny ways, I must tell you of a very curious bit of luck that happened to me, connected with a drive on a coach thereto. I had worn a thick brown cloth greatcoat, and when we pulled up at the side of the course, opposite the stand, I took my heavy garment off, and chucked it down to a cad rejoicing in the sobriquet of "Lord Cornwallis," who con-

stantly attended at such meetings, telling him to put it inside the coach. I never gave the old coat a thought till, on my way back to London, I got down opposite the end of Roehampton Lane—as I was going to dine with a party who lived hard by—and then I missed my coat. I thought the faithful cad must have put it in one of the other coaches which were drawn up next to ours ; so, next morning, sent my servant round to look for it, but never could hear anything of it, and so felt confident that the hitherto trustworthy “Peer” had stolen it, and I never would have anything more to do with him, as he was the last man I had seen touch it; and it was next to impossible for any one to have abstracted the coat when once put into the interior of the coach.

Well! the following year, I went to Baden Baden in August, and one day my servant came to me, and told me he had found my greatcoat. I asked him where. He replied that “Mr. Cooper’s servant had put it away in his master’s house in London.” Did you ever? It appeared that the two valets had been discussing the character of “Lord Cornwallis,” and my man had told his comrade that the party under discussion had stolen my greatcoat at Hampton Races the previous year, describing some peculiarities about the garment to

him, when Cooper's servant said : " Why ! I have got it safe enough ; my master brought it back from Hampton Races last year, and, as no one claimed it, I folded it up and put it away in a drawer." And, sure enough, on my return to England, there was my old coat, which I had long given up ever seeing again. Of course, I apologised to " Lord Cornwallis " ; the, silly old man had, in the hurry of the moment, put the coat on Cooper's phaeton, which was near our coach, and forgot to take it up and stow it away inside.

It will soon be four years since I lost my best of pals, Jerry G. (Major-General Goodlake, V.C., late of the Coldstream Guards), and I miss him wonderful, still. We had so many ideas in common, and our taste for sport of nearly all kinds and descriptions was so much in unison. The only sport he was passionately fond of, and I have never been bitten with, was fishing. It's curious, but I verily believe I have hardly a real pal that would not sooner whip a salmon river than spend a day in any other way, and as keen as any among them is my son, Frank. But to return to Jerry G. : I don't think I have written a line about poor Jerry's premature death. Up to some ten years ago there was no stronger, more active, or energetic man breathing than he, and I cannot help thinking

that, if he had consulted a doctor sooner, he would have been still in the land of the living. I believe a few lines on his peculiar malady may warn others not to neglect the first appearance of evil. I had observed him often fiddling with one of his ears, and sometimes causing it to bleed. I frequently chided him for so doing, but he never complained of its paining him; however, the poor ear got worse and worse, and it became evident there was a running sore; and then, and not until then, did he consult a doctor; and one of the cleverest of surgeons having been called in, he discovered that a horrible rodent ulcer was spreading its fangs over, and into his ear.

He attempted to get rid of the deadly growth by scraping all the skin and flesh off the ear. Of course Jerry was under ether during the operation, which took some time; but, though the skin grew again, the mischief was not abated. Then his tonsils became troublesome, causing him to cough terribly; and soon he could not lie down to sleep. Subsequently, Jerry attended another specialist. The first time, I went with him to see the performance. A very strong light was directed down the throat, and then a small metal globe, at white heat, was cunningly projected on to the elongated tonsils, which were gradually burnt away. Of

course, in youth, tonsils unnaturally long are simply cut off, but in a full-blooded man of fifty odd this cannot be done with safety, principally on account of the difficulty in stopping the hæmorrhage. After about a dozen visits, at intervals of a day or two between each, the operation proved successful ; and my poor pal was much benefited. The hacking cough nearly left him and he slept well ; but, alas ! the fiendish ulcer in the ear broke out again, causing him terrible pain, and the glands in his throat began to swell. After a consultation it was decided that the whole of the ear must be cut clean out of his head—not shaved off, but *dug out*. Oh dear ! oh dear ! that did fetch me ; but as it must be, the sooner it was done the better ; and the night before (I was living in his house at the time), Jerry asked me to witness his signature to some papers of importance, as he felt the operation was a case of touch and go. Then, he took me up and showed me how beautifully he had arranged the operating-table close to the window, so that the surgeon might have the best of light for his ghastly work !

Poor, poor old pal ! At nine the next morning three professionals appeared, and I asked to be allowed to see my old friend through it ; and when I told them I had been in charge of the hospitals at Balaclava for some two months, I was allowed to be

present. Nothing could have been more skilfully, expeditiously, and thoroughly carried out; and that wretched old ear, which had caused its late owner so much pain, was taken clean out from the very socket, and the patient put to bed. The after-effects of the ether were very curious. When I was sitting on his bed watching for him to come to himself, after a few heavy sighs Jerry opened his eyes, and saw me, and in a hysterical sort of way began crying and muttering: "How could he do it? Why didn't he stand up to his man? But he ran away! Oh! how could he be called an Englishman?" &c. &c. His first thoughts reverting to a boxing-match he and I had been to see together not very long before, and it was in vain I tried to calm him till he had a sleeping draught given him.

Wonderful to say, the hole in his head soon healed, and a skin grew right over it, and we hoped for the best. Jerry recovered his strength sufficiently to go out shooting, and never shot better than he did when he came to stop with me at Elsham. Yet, the fangs of the loathsome ulcer were evidently not entirely exterminated, and he soon began to suffer terrible pains again. One afternoon I had gone down to Denham (his delicious little place near Uxbridge, that he had made so perfect), to have a bite of dinner with him; but,

though he tried hard, he could only swallow with great difficulty, and I thought so badly of him that, on my return to town that night, I called on the surgeon and told him he must not lose an hour. He was at his poor patient's bedside by light next morning, and decided to operate on his throat the next day. But, alas! when he arrived my dear old pal was dead. His heart had stopped. And so passed away one of the truest friends, the very gamest and the kindest-hearted gentleman that ever drew breath.

What he suffered none can tell, but he was that game he never complained, and would not let his discomfort interfere with the enjoyment of those around him. He was most carefully and kindly tended by his good wife, who hardly ever left him, and by one of the best servants I ever came across. Ah! that was a blow to me, and I have never felt such a soft one as I did when standing by poor Jerry's grave. Moral: don't put off seeing a doctor till you're so bad you cannot do without him.

I am half afraid that this account of poor Jerry G., and the following few words in memory of my old friend "Curly" Knox, may be regarded as forming a somewhat sad wind-up to my labours; but I cannot lay down the pen without first offering this slight testimony of regard for two old comrades

and friends. We must all die some day, but both these men suffered long and bravely, bearing without a murmur what many a brave heart would have quailed under. More honour to them both!

March 9th. I have to-day attended the funeral of Major-General George Knox, better known in my old regiment as "Curly" Knox, his sobriquet being derived from his natural crisp curly hair. I didn't know he was ill till I saw his death in the papers. I had known him well since he was quite a lad, as his good father, who was also in the regiment, used to bring his only boy to the barracks. The old man was real proud of his lad when he joined, and used often to dine on guard. I have mentioned in my account of the Crimea that "little" Knox had a bad fall there in 1856, but he met with a worse accident afterwards in Dublin, when his horse having fallen with him, the animal, in getting up, unfortunately trod on poor "Curly's" face and terribly damaged his nose. He was a real good chap, a good soldier, and a fine horseman.

At his graveside in Brompton Cemetery there were very many of his old friends, besides his widow and her two brothers, Hugh Lonsdale and Lancelot Lowther. Whilst we were mustering for the sad ceremony, Colonel Brabazon told me of a curious coincidence—viz., that it was twenty-six years ago

that very day since "Curly" had ridden the winner of the Grand Military for him at Rugby—King Arthur, by the Cure out of Miss Agnes, dam of Lily Agnes, the dam of Ormonde ; there's a pedigree difficult to beat ! Rugby was a fine natural course and took some jumping, and required both rider and horse to be of the resolute order. We buried our old comrade in the next grave to his father, and then I, and another old friend of his changed our sorrowful garments and expressions, and went down to Sandown, where we witnessed a splendid race for the Grand Military Cup between *Æsop* and *Midshipmite*. How poor "Curly" would have enjoyed seeing that finish, and how heartily would he have congratulated Sir C. Slade (Scots Guards), the winning jockey !

Death has been busy with my friends just lately ; Bobby Harbord, one of the cheeriest, went off very suddenly ; and my two doctors within a week of each other : Barnard Holt, a good man to hounds, had attained a good old age ; but Barton Smith was just coming to his best, and had gone out in charge of a rich Yankee for a trip round the world, but died of malarial fever after landing in Ceylon. He was not only a clever doctor, but a sympathetic and kind-hearted friend—a combination not met with every day. However, I must look round for one of the

same sort, for I am getting a poor, worn-out old tool, and, though it is hardly fair to expect any medico can combat with the ever-increasing and inconvenient fact that you were "born too soon," yet, when pain and discomfort worry you, it is very consolatory to be tended by one you have every confidence in, and who you feel takes a friendly interest in your well-being.

Writing of such like matters reminds me of a very peculiar effort of sympathy by an utterly unsympathetic, and somewhat low-lived man, towards his dying brother. This brother was an old Eton friend of mine, a very clever and amusing companion and a good sportsman, whom we will call "Bob," and the younger brother "Will." Poor Bob's end was fast approaching, and it was only at intervals that he was sufficiently conscious to recognise those around him; his brother Will was sitting by his bedside, occasionally scratching his unkempt head, and constantly gnawing the knobby top of an ash-plant he always carried in his hand, but had never spoken a word to his dying brother. A mutual friend said to him, "Will, why don't you speak to poor Bobby? it might cheer him to know you were near!" Will, with an effort, withdrew the ash-plant from his mouth, and in his deep sepulchral voice thus spoke: "Why don't you rouse

yourself, Bob, and take a little stimulant?" Poor Bob! he had long been beyond rousing himself, and Will, seeing there was no chance of his advice being taken, left, and at the first convenient "pub." took the stimulant himself, and never saw his brother again.

Now, my readers, I am told by my Publisher and Editor that I can pull up when I like. My task is over, and I candidly admit I am real glad to think I can spend my evenings as I like, and can dine out whenever I am asked. You have little idea how irksome this peculiar literary effort has been to your Author. I have never written a page except after dark, for I found it next to useless to try and concentrate my thoughts on the days that are gone, when the sun was up. The busy bees in this vast hive of commerce and gambling, are trying to gather honey (*alias* chips) all the day from every opening flower—*id est*, company-mongering, Stock Exchange besting, or racecourse frequenting; but when the bees, drones, and workers get them to their separate hives, or, in other words, their homes and families, theatres, and music-halls, then I betake me to my chamber, where I can be still, and jot down in a rough note-book my ideas and recollections.

When I have thus compiled sufficient copy, I summon my shorthand-writer, and dictate to him

in a couple of hours what has, likely enough, taken me several evenings to scribble. That done, he takes the result away and typewrites a duplicate copy—one for me and one for my poor Editor—and thus I have got through, in about thirteen months, what I ought easily to have accomplished in half the time. This week, these said reminiscences will reach the Publisher, and then comes the rub—will they sell well? shall I find a market for my honey? in other words, shall I get some ointment to give flavour to the dry crust my expensive habits of bygone days have relegated me to for existence in this vale of tears? Shall I be able to pay off some of my most pressing debts, and, perchance, have a modest bit of ready to back my fancy with when flitting round the pleasant places where the speedy thoroughbred and the genteel penciller most do congregate? Oh yes! oh yes! Leastways the Author—and, may I add? (yes, I think so) many of my readers—will hope so; then 1894 will indeed be a cheery year for me. To each of my subscribers I tender my hearty thanks, and wish they may derive as much pleasure in perusing these pages, as it has cost me bother in jotting down “Fifty Years of My Life.”

I have been much assisted in writing this book by Joseph Lewis, whose acquaintance I made at

Newmarket in April, 1886, under the following circumstances: I was sitting on my cob one morning, watching the different batches of horses taking their exercise-gallops across the flat, and whilst talking to Lord and Lady Zetland, I suddenly beheld an animal (I found out it was a three-year-old aptly named Catastrophe) overpower her tiny rider, whose bodily weight was only five stone, and bolt with him near the site of the old betting-ring; and, as I watched, I saw him come into collision with one of the posts, on which a notice was affixed, and, to my horror, saw the little lad knocked off the saddle and lie motionless upon the ground. Fearing he must be badly hurt, I galloped to where he lay, and at a glance discovered he was terribly knocked about: one arm was broken, and the bone of his left thigh was snapped, and protruding through his trousers. I at once galloped back and obtained permission from Zetland to allow his carriage (which was, fortunately, waiting at the Stand) to take the unfortunate lad to the Rous Memorial Hospital, and then hurrying off to the town, I had two doctors ready by the time the carriage reached the hospital.

The delicate little lad was quite unconscious, and the doctors at first thought he was dead; but, finding

he still breathed, they at once amputated his leg and set his arm ; but it seemed as if the shock had been too much for him. They had nearly given him up, when the assistant restored respiration by pressing his chest up and down, much as you and I use a pair of bellows, and after a protracted struggle between life and death, the patient, under skilful treatment, and much kind attention from the matron, gradually improved. Eventually, after five months in the hospital, he was sent home to his mother, a widow in London.

I got up a subscription for him, and in course of time had him taught shorthand and type-writing, and with the aid of a visit now and again to Elsham, where the country air did wonders for him, the little man soon regained his strength, and he now gets along at a good pace with his crutch, which he prefers to a cork limb (and rightly, too I think), though the good Duke of Portland has paid for an exquisite cork leg for him ; which work of art Lewis one day brought up to my lodgings, carrying it under his arm, to show me. He notes down what I give him *vivâ voce* in shorthand, and then takes it away and type-writes—for my Editor*—the

* The first volume of this work was written entirely afresh from Lewis's shorthand notes. The second volume only was type-written.—EDITOR.

contents of this my book. Never, I fancy, was a life nearer ebbing than Lewis's, and it is quite certain that the comfortable carriage of Lord Zetland and the well-appointed hospital (not, of course, overlooking the skill of the doctors and the care of the matron) were, under Providence, the means of preserving the life of so useful a member of society. What should I have done without him?

Next to the Author, I suppose the kind friend who undertakes to wade through sheets of ungrammatical composition is most to be pitied, and, though some editors may have had easy times of it, I fear mine has not; and the uncertainty as to whether any copy would reach him one week, and the certainty none would turn up the next, has, doubtless, been very trying to my friend's nervous system. However, he has survived it, and now his labours are pretty well over, and I may be pardoned if I devote a few lines to the good qualities of my old friend, Dicky Thorold, whom I have known very many years, and whose people lived at Cuxwold in Lincolnshire, not very far from Elsham. Their third son, Dick, started life as a middy in the Navy, and, tiring of the sea, he was fortunate enough, through the friendship of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, whom he

accompanied to Canada in 1860, to get a commission in the 10th Hussars. He served with that smart regiment some eight years, and, as his lovely sister had married Richard Naylor, the squire of Hooton, and owner of the grand old Stockwell—that prince of sires—and of Maccaroni, the winner of the Derby of 1863, the young Hussar gave up the perpendicular style of horsemanship, and became owner of some good light-weight hunters and a few steeplechase horses, the best of which were Merlin, Hilarity, and Marmora. They were trained at Pitt Place by “Fogo” Rowlands, and ridden with considerable success by their owner (my editor) at Rugby and other cross-country meetings. The sailor, soldier, and steeplechase-rider some years since took to church a charming lady, who, being of a literary turn of mind, imbued her husband with the lofty aspirations of authorship, and under assumed names they have both written several very pleasant novels. Between them, they had much to do with inducing me to try my “’prentice hand” at writing this book, and I verily believe, had it not been for their combined resolute driving, I should never have stuck to my work; and I owe so much to my editor’s *suaviter in modo* combined with his *fortiter in re* style of persuasion that I have at last finished my task,

and whether I win *kudos* or lose caste by the venture, I know I should never have "run the long course and got over all the obstacles" if it had not been for my good friend and editor "Dick."

THE END.

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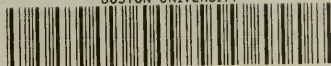
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